

PC ZONE

www.pczone.co.uk

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PC GAMES!

C&C - RED ALERT: THE AFTERMATH

Can The Game That
Started It All Still
Compete?



THE COMPLETE
GUIDE TO
ECSTATICA 2
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**WORLD
EXCLUSIVE
REVIEW!**

TOMB RAIDER 2

**STARRING
LARA CROFT**

EXCLUSIVE REVIEW! **MAGESLAYER**

From The Makers of Hexen II
Comes Gauntlet For The Nineties

PLUS!

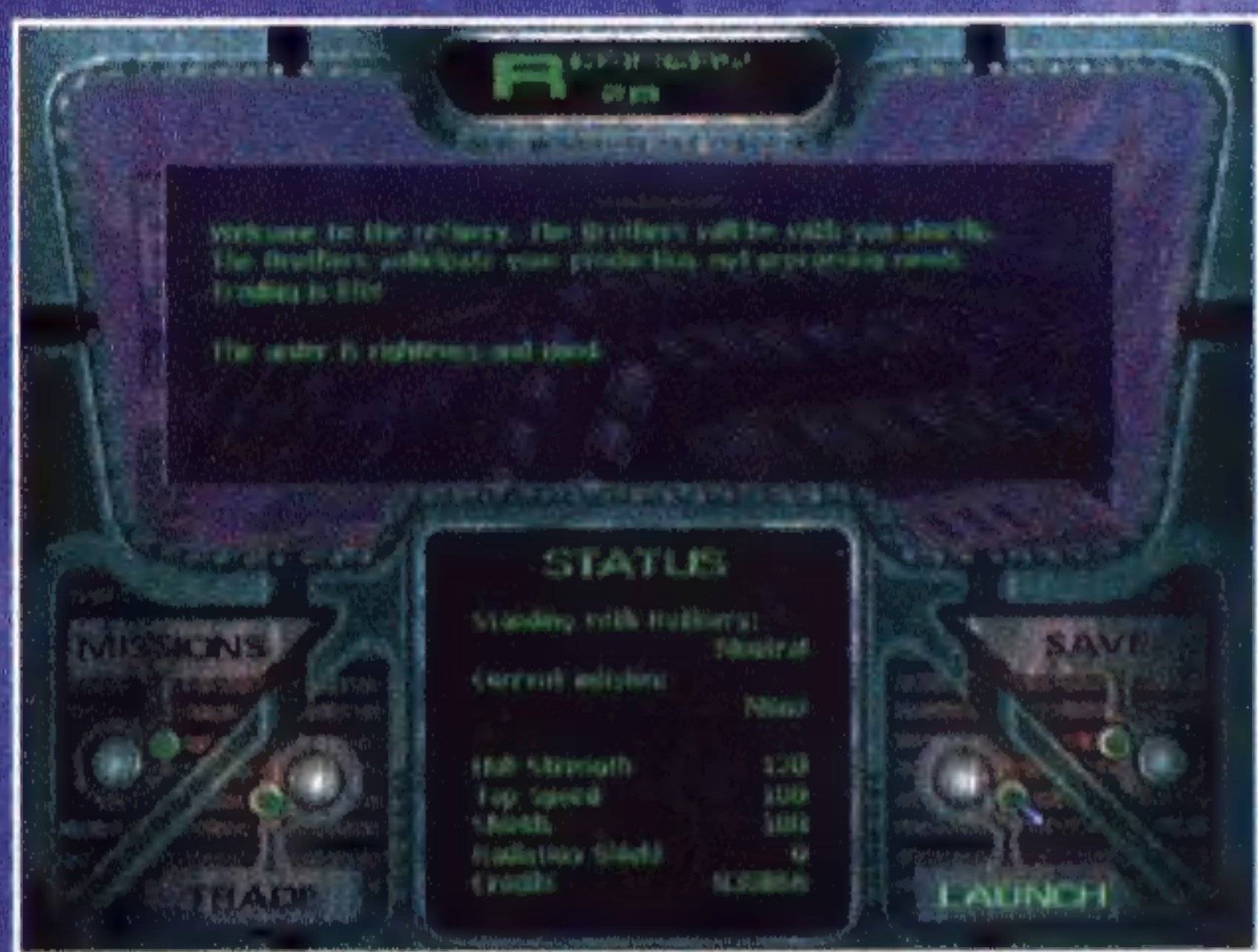
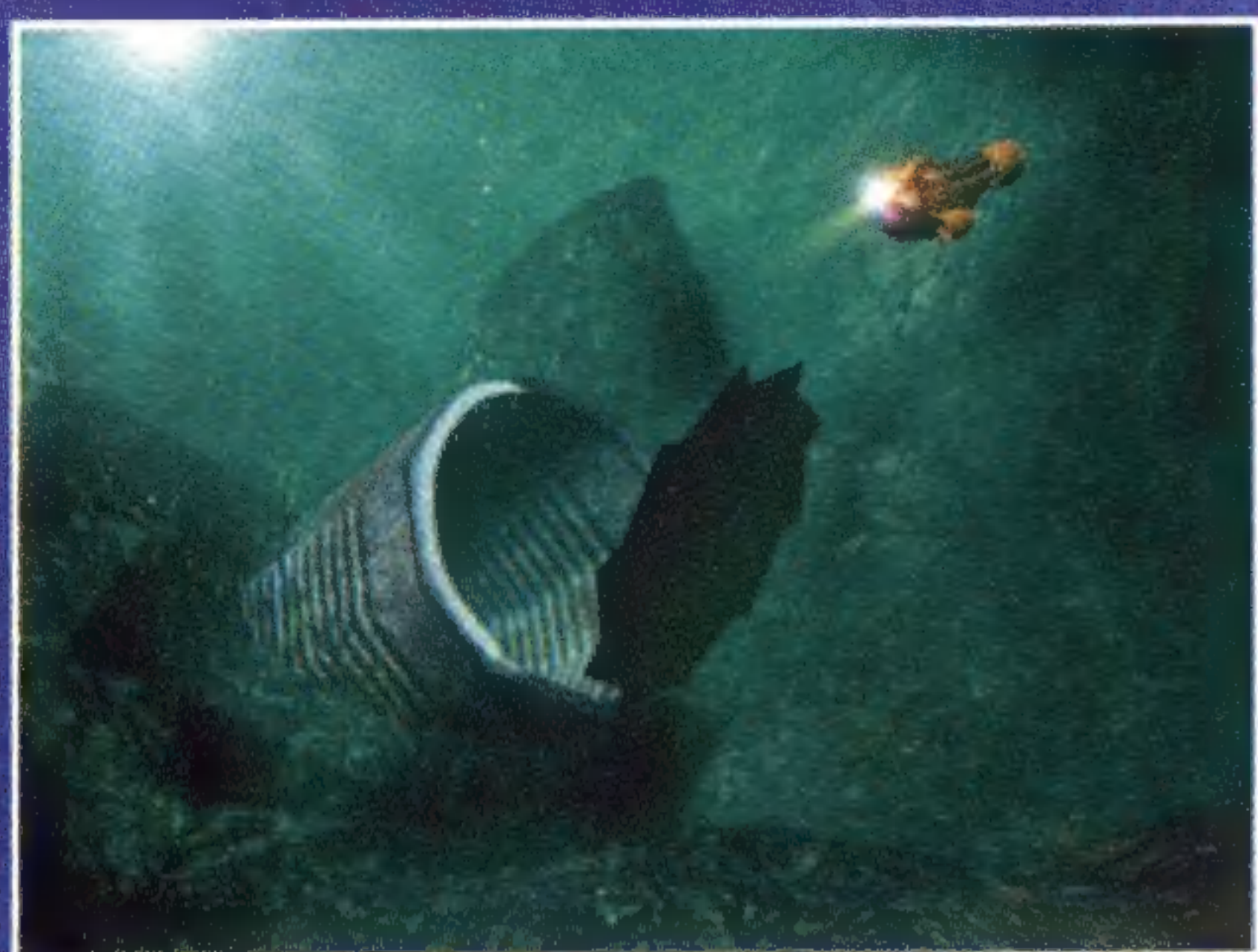
• G-Police • CM2e 97/98 • Broken Sword 2 • Sensible Soccer 2000
• NHL 98 • Riven • Everything You Wanted To Know About Hexen II

IF YOUR CD IS MISSING PLEASE CONSULT YOUR NEWSAGENT



WILL YOURS BE A WATERY GRAVE?





SUB CULTURE

Deep under the sea a terrible battle is taking place. From your submarine your mission is to bring peace to these troubled waters. In Sub Culture you'll experience a stunningly accurate underwater world with real time 3D graphics, night and day special effects and amazing sea creatures with their own A.I. Can you turn the tide of war?



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This product supports Force Feedback devices

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**WIN!
WIN!
WIN!**

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PC!

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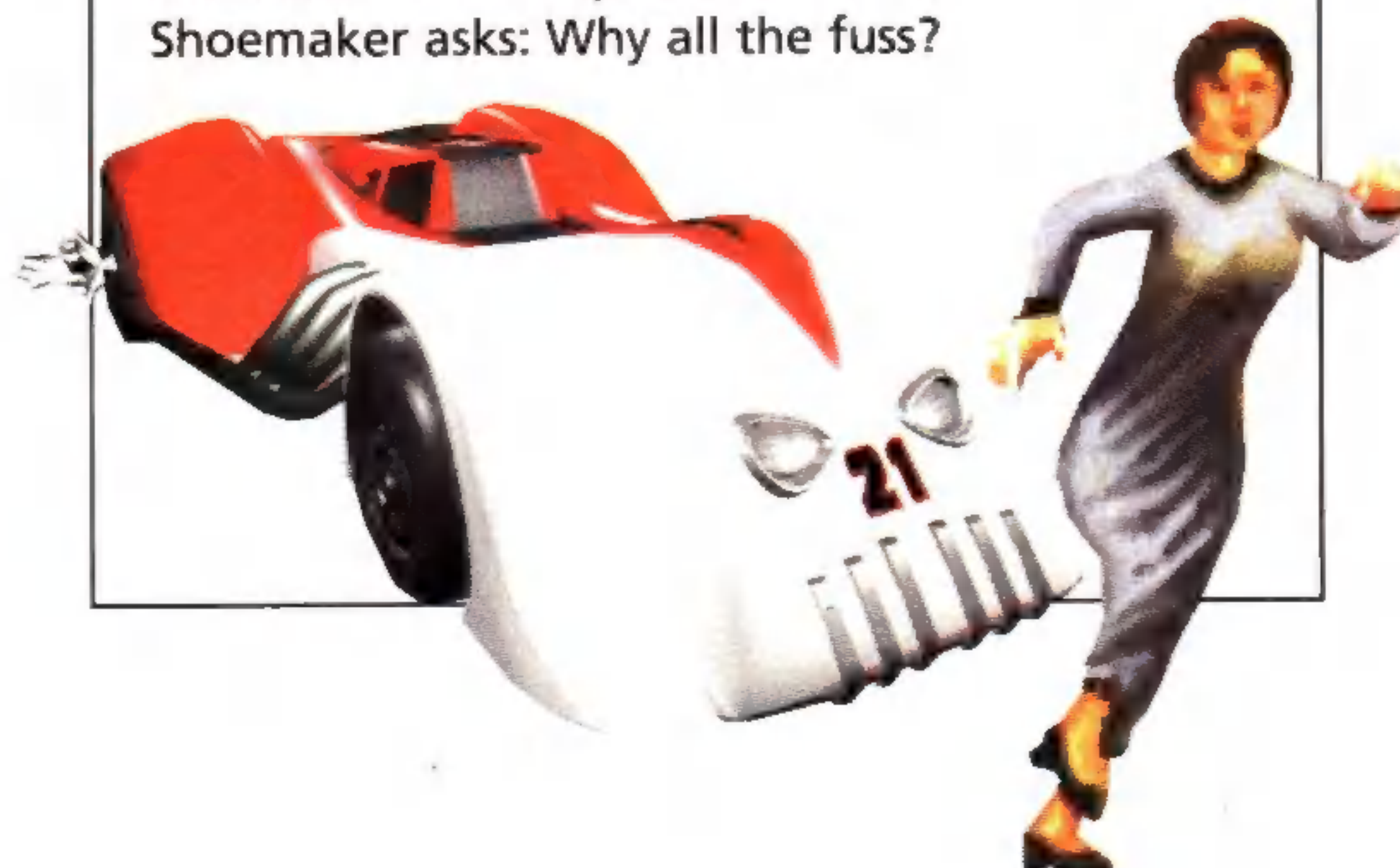
SCREAMER RALLY 96



Feature

Carmageddon: the game they tried to ban 148

Few games have caused as much controversy as *Carmageddon*. Politicians were falling over themselves trying to get the game banned; worried parents were similarly upset, but gamers everywhere embraced it with open arms. Richie Shoemaker asks: Why all the fuss?



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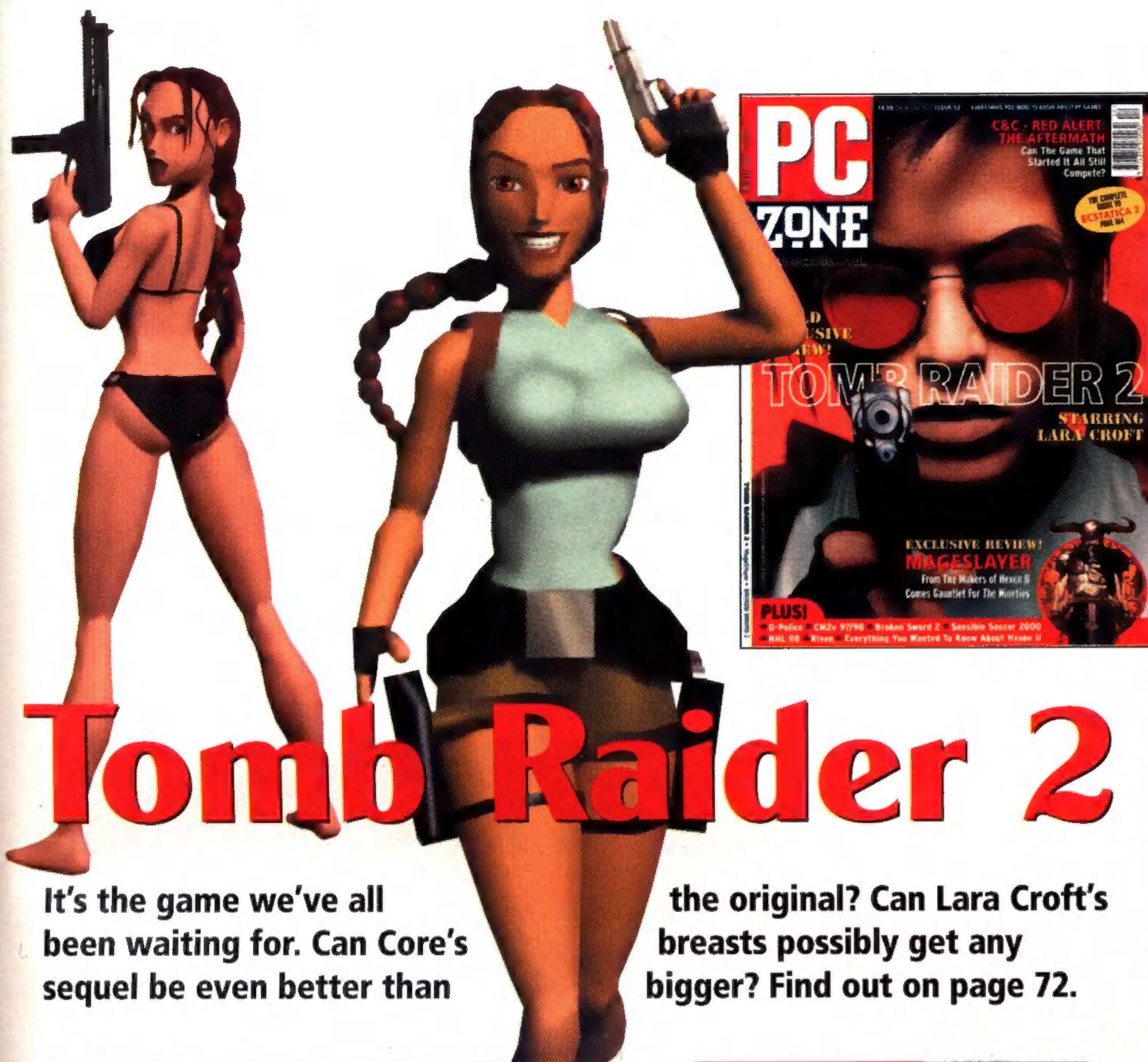
CM2 update for the new season. Gasp! Want to know the *whole* Barnsley squad?

Sid Meier's Gettysberg 123

"It's a corker!" says Andrew Wright.

7th Legion 128

Yet another C&C clone joins the ranks.



Tomb Raider 2

It's the game we've all been waiting for. Can Core's sequel be even better than

the original? Can Lara Croft's breasts possibly get any bigger? Find out on page 72.



SUB CULTURE 80



RIVEN 99



BROKEN SWORD II: THE SMOKING MIRROR 111



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NHL 98 85

**PC
ZONE**

19 Bolsover St,
London W1P 7HJ

Tel: 0171 631 1433
Fax: 0171 436 1321
CIX: pczone@CIX.co.uk
Website: www.pczone.co.uk

Editor Jeremy Wells 0171 917 3864
Deputy Editor Chris Anderson 0171 917 3901
News Editor Paul Mallinson 0171 917 3830
Staff Writer Richard Shoemaker 0171 917 5675
Art Editor Wag 0171 917 3911
Production Editor Mark Sinclair 0171 917 5676
Sub Editor Thea Marcuard 0171 917 3914
CD Editors Daniel Emery 0171 917 7689, Marcus Pullen 0171 917 3857, Gareth Ramsey 0171 917 7646
Reader Services Alex Taylor
Contributors David McCormack, Tim MacDonald, (Design); Amaya Lopez, Paul Dimery (Production)
Writers Charlie Brooker, Warren Christmas, Daniel Emery, Steve Hill, David McCandless, Patrick McCarthy, Paul Presley, Andrew Wright
Publisher John Davison 0171 917 3981
Group Publisher Tim Ponting 0171 917 7666
Subscriptions Hotline 01454 620070 - cihotline@aol.com
Back Issues 01789 490215
Advertising Manager Mike Shepherd 0171 917 3873
Senior Sales Executive Emma Lewis 0171 917 7708
Group Ad Manager Warren Wooldridge 0171 917 7621
Production Manager Sarah Hedley 0171 917 3890
Account Handler Julia Smith 0171 917 3957
Advertising Production Sharon Drumm 0171 917 3937
Marketing Manager Cheryl Hamer 0171 917 7802
List Rental Executive Nerys Church 0171 917 5663
List Rental Executive Simon McCay 0171 917 3943
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Circulation Director Sean Farmer 0171 917 7654
Marketing Director Alison Townsend 0171 917 7675
Non-Executive Director Dick Pountain
Financial Director Ian Leggett 0171 917 7679
Managing Director Alistair Ramsay 0171 917 7661
Chairman Felix Dennis

Dennis

TIPS LINE: 0171 917 7698
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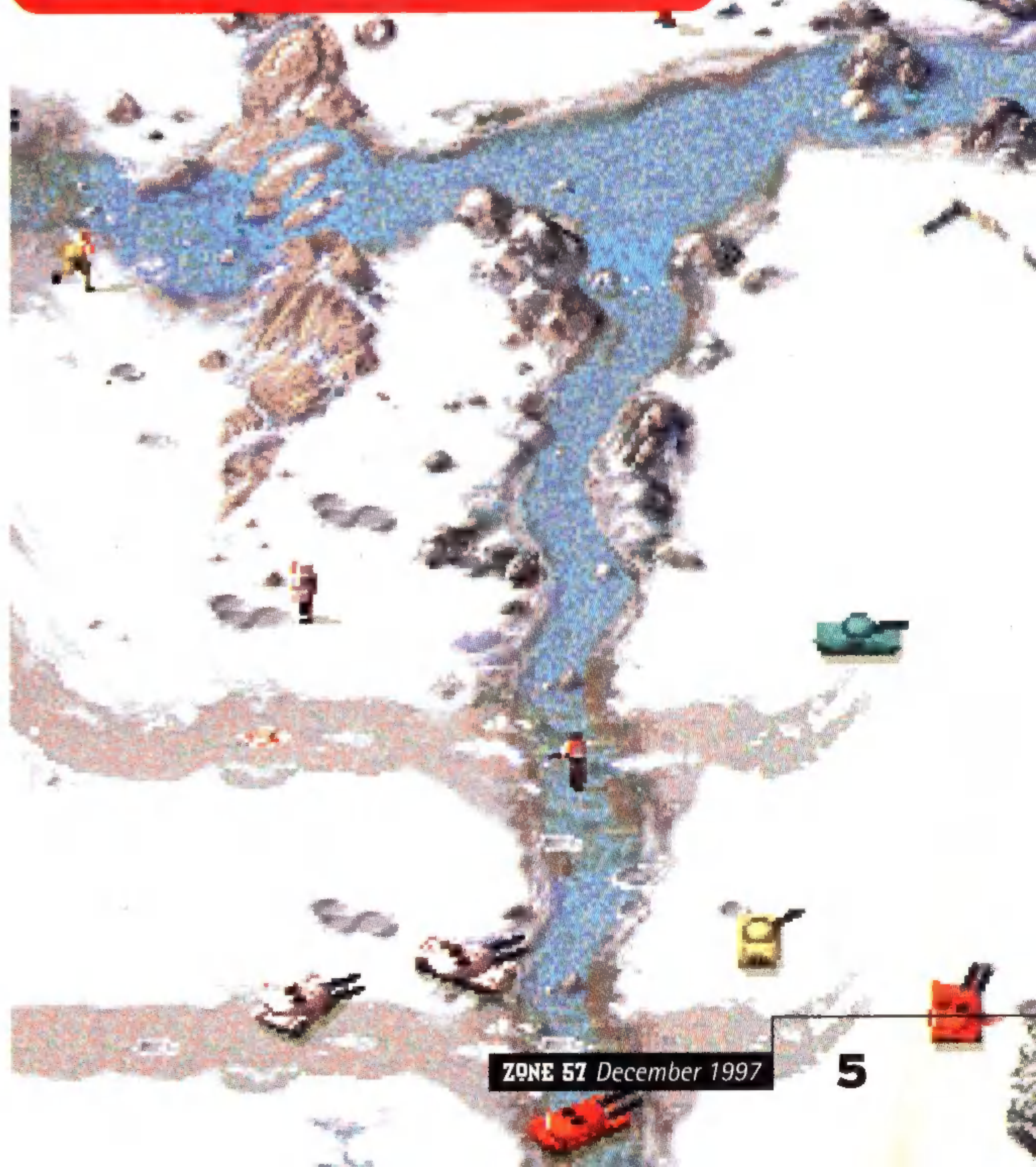
The Christmas issue of **PC Zone** goes on sale Friday 21 November

PPA

ABC 55,083

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C&C: THE AFTERMATH 111



CD ZONE

On the disc

Once again we've got some fantastic demos on this month's CD Zone - demos that you won't find on any other magazine in the UK for at least two weeks - They're completely **EXCLUSIVE** to *PC Zone*. So pop the CD in your drive and start installing them now!

To access the games on this month's CD, pop the disc in your CD-ROM drive and double-click on the CD icon on your desktop. Double-click on **PCZONE.EXE** to launch the Windows browser.



MINIMUM SPECIFICATION

You'll need at least a Pentium 90 with 8Mb RAM to run the software on this month's CD-ROM.

Many of the programs are designed to run under Windows 95 and, as a result, some of them may require a Pentium 133 with 16Mb RAM to run satisfactorily. Please note that some games also require a 3D accelerator card to run.

Use the browser and menu system to see which demos are Windows 95, DOS and 3D accelerator only.

Help!

The CD not working? HD playing up? The PC's being a total bast? Don't worry - phone our helpline and sort yourself out pronto!

HD DISK HELP

Phone Matthew on 01274 736990
Any week day between 9am and 4pm

CD-ROM HELP

Phone ABT on 01708 250250
Any week day between 11am and 6pm
(Please **DO NOT** phone the *PC Zone* office as your calls will **NOT** be answered)

If you are calling either help line, then please take note of the following points:

- If possible have your PC operating and near to the phone when you call.
- If this is not possible, note down all relevant information ie system type, sound card, RAM etc, plus the nature of the fault.
- Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call to jot down the relevant info.

No CD?

If you are unable to get your grubby paws on the CD issue, then fear not! Simply fill out this slip, enclose your HDs from the cover plus a cheque for a whole £1 and send it to:

CD Exchange (57), PC Zone, Bradley Pavillions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol, BS12 0BQ

Your details (please print clearly)

Name:

Address:

Post code:

Please make cheques payable to:

DENNIS PUBLISHING Ltd.

CDs from previous issues are also available.

TOMB RAIDER 2

Eidos

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!



THIS HUGE ONE-LEVEL DEMO OF the fantastic *Tomb Raider 2* from Core Design is completely **EXCLUSIVE** to *PC Zone*. Starring everyone's favourite game heroine, Lara Croft, the sequel features new graphics, weapons and baddies and some fantastic new locations for you to explore. It's now a fact that Lara Croft has been to more countries than Judith Chalmers! If you've got a 3D accelerator card inside your machine, then you're in for a real treat, cos *TR2* looks gorgeous. So install it now and find out why we're calling it the sequel of the year.

Controls: Keyboard/gamepad



Directional movement



Jump



Fire



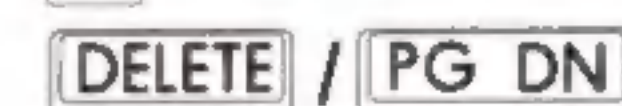
Draw/holster weapon



Walk



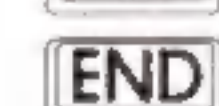
Look



Sidestep



left/right



Inventory

Roll



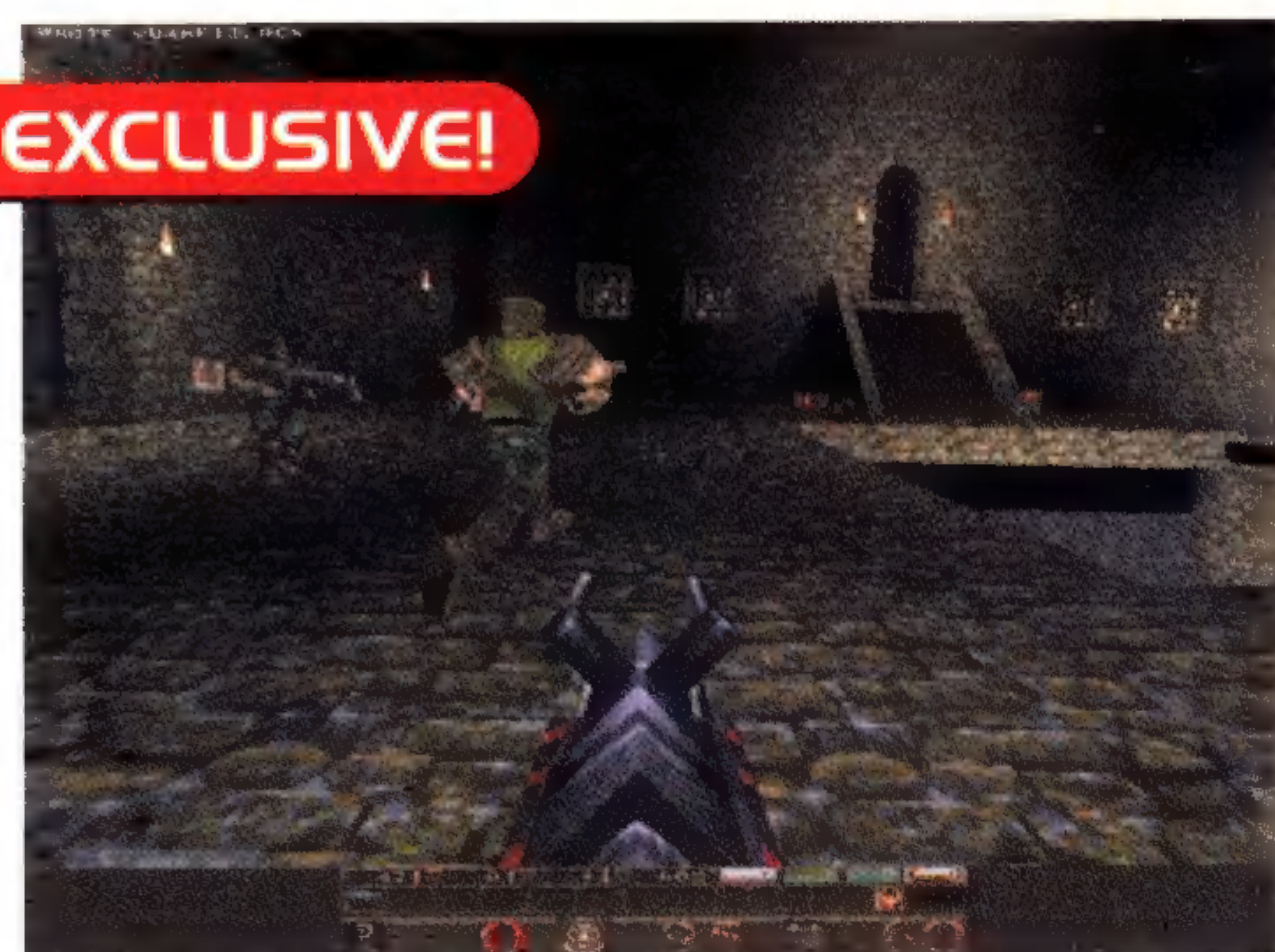
QUAKE TOTAL CONVERSIONS

WE HAVE TWO *QUAKE* TC'S FOR YOU THIS month. *Zerstorer* is a new episode which also has cut scenes between the missions. If you liked *Blood*, try this *Quake* interpretation.

Painkeep is a conversion that makes multi-player *Quake* ten times better. We in the *Zone* offices have ditched regular *Quake* multi-player maps in favour of the ones featured here. There are also loads of new weapons, including auto-sentries, grappling hooks and tins of fart-inducing beans. Each has its own README file with instructions on how to run the games (zer.txt for *Zerstorer* and readme.txt for *Painkeep*).

N.B. You will need a full version of *Quake* to run these TC's.

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!



JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES II

LucasArts/VIE

THIS HUGE PLAYABLE DEMO SHOWS OFF THE FANTASTIC SEQUEL TO *DARK Forces* from LucasArts. There's one massive level to explore, as well as a multi-player network option. Suffice to say, it's fab. So install it now. Now, ya hear? If you run into problems, access the README.TXT file.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard/joystick

W or 8 (keypad)
S or 2 (keypad)
SHIFT
CAPS LOCK

A or 1 (keypad)
D or 3 (keypad)
ALT

< (directional) or 4 (keypad)
> (directional) or 6 (keypad)
X or Right mouse button:

C
HOME or 5 (keypad)

PG UP

PG DN

V

Move forward
Move backward
Run
Slow mode (hold key down while moving)
Sidestep to left
Sidestep to right
Slide toggle (modifies your turn right/turn left controls)
Turn left
Turn right
Jump and swim up
Crouch and swim down.
Centre view (centres your view in middle of screen)
Look up
Look down
Free look (if you press and hold the V key while moving the mouse, it allows you to look around. This feature is on by default)

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!



Keyboard Controls:

and /

CTRL / 0 (keypad)
or left mouse button

Z

,

.

3

4

5

,

7

8

,

0

Cycle weapons

Primary fire
Secondary fire
Kyle's fists
Bryar pistol
Stormtrooper rifle
Thermal detonator
Bowcaster
Imperial repeater
Rail detonator
Sequencer charge
Concussion rifle
Lightsaber



EXCLUSIVE!



TUROK (Acclaim)

N64 games seem to just get better when ported for the PC, especially when optimised to use current 3D hardware acceleration. This first person shoot 'em up has some incredible graphics - just see for yourself. N.B. This demo is 3Dfx only.

Controls: Keyboard

↑ ↓ ← →
1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 0

< / >

PG UP / PG DN

HOME / END

CAPS LOCK

Movement

Weapon select

Strafe

Look up/down

Quick look

Run



KICK OFF 98 (Anco)

You can play one half of fluid passing football in this limited feature demo. Choose your side (only a limited number are available in this demo), select your tactics and wait till the whistle blows. Different views are available (by pressing the function keys) and you can re-define your keys, though we suggest you use a gamepad or joystick.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

↑ ↓ ← →

SHIFT

CONTROL

/

.

F5 - F8

Movement

Pass

Shoot

Heel flick

Back heel/dummy

Change view

EXCLUSIVE!



SCREAMER RALLY (VIE)

This excellent one track demo allows you to take one car around a super slip-slidey track that undulates more than a rollercoaster. Again, if you've got a 3D accelerator card in your machine, then you're in for a real

visual treat. You can re-define the control keys, although we suggest that you use either a joystick or gamepad.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

↑

↓

←

→

CTRL / ALT

F1 - F4

Accelerate

Brake

Left

Right

Gear change

Change view

EXCLUSIVE!



FIGHTING FORCE (Eidos)

Control either of the four characters from the full version in this 3D beat 'em up from the makers of *Tomb Raider 2*. In this demo you can pick up crowbars, tyres, pistols and even rocket launchers to take out all your 3D foe. A two-player mode is also available.

Controls: Keyboard/joyypad

↑ ↓ ← →

,

Movement

Run/backfist

Right ALT
Right CTRL
Right SHIFT

Punch/fire
Kick
Jump

EXCLUSIVE!



MAGESLAYER (GT Interactive)

Two of the massive sewer levels are available in this *Gauntlet*-esque action game from Raven. You can choose to play Earth Lord or Inquisitor, or if you have access to a network, play deathmatch on this fantastic EXCLUSIVE playable demo.

Controls: Keyboard/mouse

↑ ↓ ← →

/

X

CAPS LOCK

ALT

CTRL

BACKSPACE

/

ENTER

,

Z

Movement

Strafe

Jump

Speed lock

Melee attack

Spell attack

Special ability

Inventory

Use item

Look forward

Zoom in



7TH LEGION (MicroProse)

MicroProse's C&C game goes for the action slice of the pie, as opposed to heavy resource management. This demo allows you to control both sides, and many of the units that will appear in the full retail version. The enemy will find you pretty quickly so don't hang about, and remember to use your battle cards - they can swing an entire battle in your favour.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

CTRL + Pass	Forces an attack (even on your own units and buildings)
ESC	Game menu
CTRL 1 - CTRL 0	Store detachment
1 - 0	Recall stored detachment
R	Toggle building repair on/off
SHIFT + left mouse button	Add unit to current group
Right mouse button	Select all friendly units on visible screen performing same action
HOME	Centre view on base
END	Go back to the view before you pressed HOME
T	Toggle tactical radar
I	Toggle infra red radar
TAB	Toggle radar on/off
V	Centre view on select unit(s)

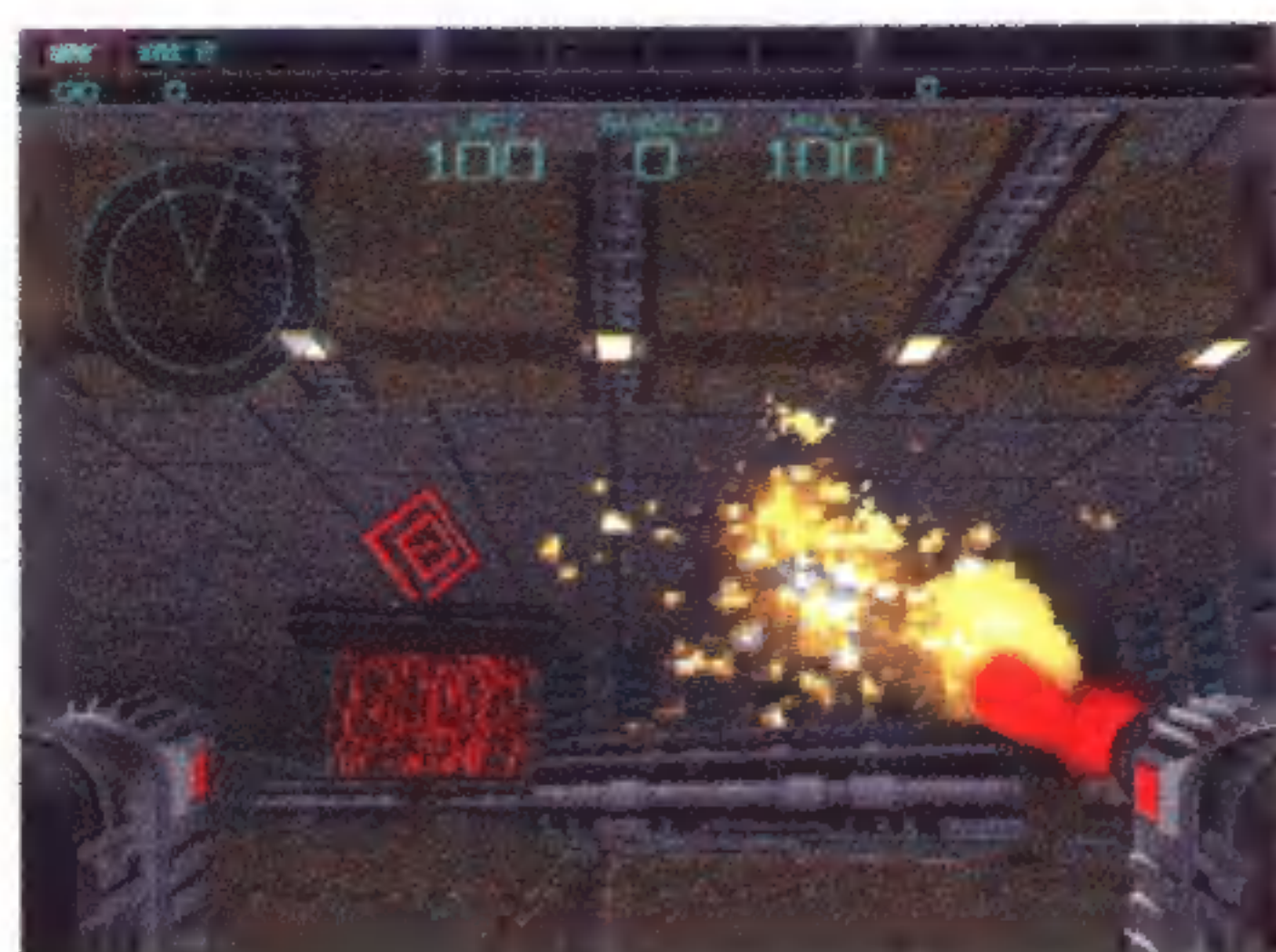
EARTH 2140 (Interplay)

As always, the future is a nasty place to be. This real-time strategy game from Interplay allows you to control either of two sides, building up a sizeable base so that you can force an attack on your enemy. Standard C&C mouse control applies.

Control: Mouse/keyboard

CTRL + 1 - 8	Create unit groups
1 - 8	Select unit group

F2	Save menu
F3	Load menu
P	Pause
R	Reinforcements
Z	Select all troops

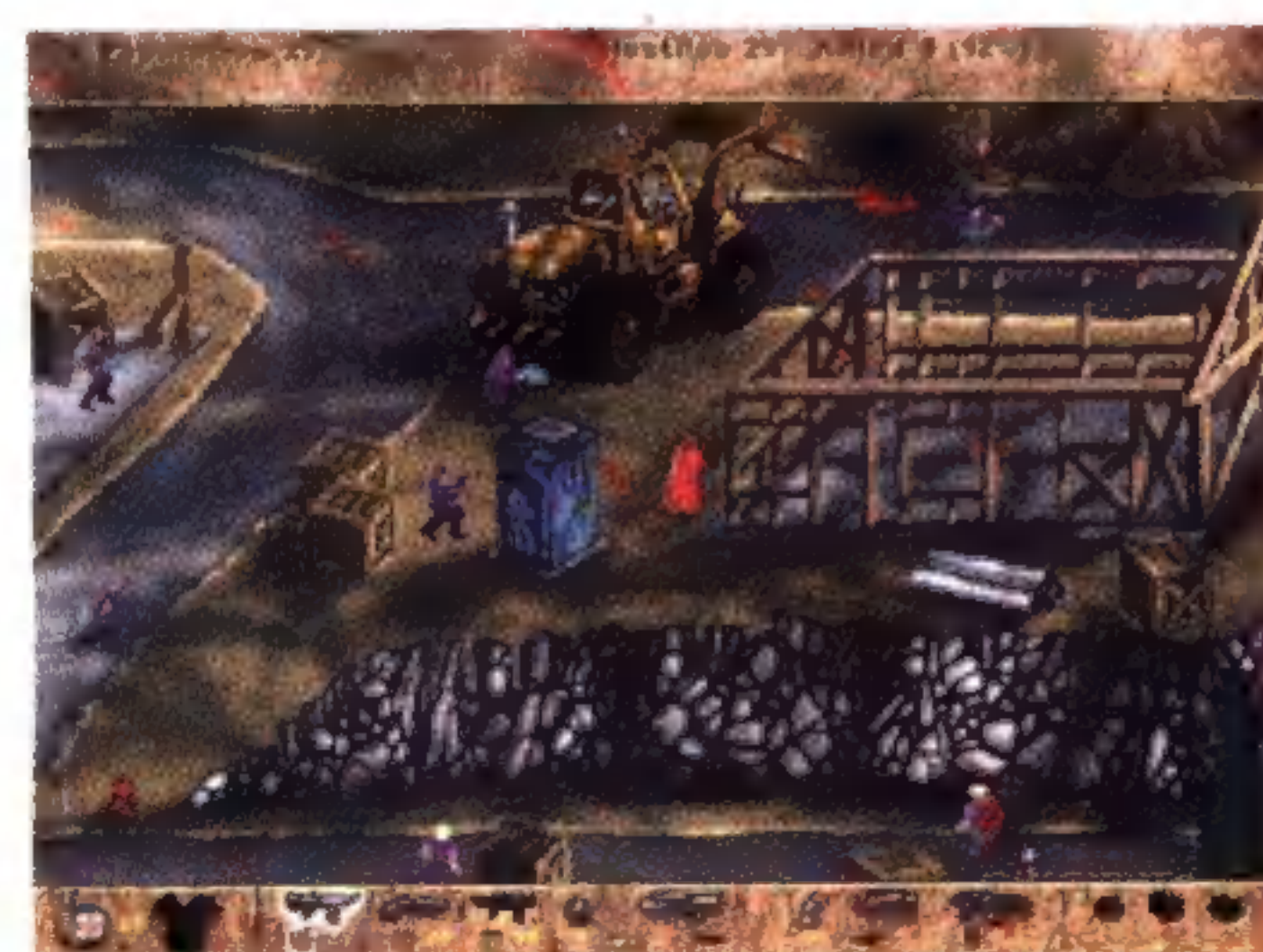


DEFIANCE (Avalon Hill)

Descent-style action is the order of the day in this demo, where a simple training mission goes pear-shaped and nasty alien types infiltrate your base. The keys should be familiar to all you Quake/Descent types - get blasting.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

ESC	Bring up menu screens
1 - 8	Weapon quick select
F1	Show game controls
↑	Forward
↓	Backwards
←	Rotate left
→	Rotate right
E	Thrust
S	Slide left
F	Slide right
[]	Fire gun
CTRL L	Fire missile
G	Look up
T	Look down
B	Look ahead
TAB	View voice log
F2	External view



POSTAL (Take 2)

Everyone is out to get you, so you are out to get everyone else in this rather disturbed shoot 'em all up. This version includes one single player level, a multi-player level and a challenge level. It's easy to get the hang of: just move about and kill everyone, no matter how much they plead for their pitiful lives.

Controls: Keyboard

↑ ← ↓ →	Movement
SHIFT	Run

ALT	Strafe
CTRL	Fire
O	Duck
[]	Rejuvenate
X	Execute
1 - 0	Weapon select
Q	Suicide



WARBIRDS (I-Magic OnLine)

This is Version 2.0 of the popular WWII internet flight sim from Interactive Magic, which those of you lacking in the modem department can try off-line. The visuals might not be up to much when compared to some of the more recent flight sims, but we're sure that you'll forego a bit of graphical nicety in order to get on-line and start shooting at some real-life opponents. After all, how often do you get the opportunity to shoot someone from Coventry and get away with it?

There is full in-game help available so we won't waste valuable space telling you how to play the game.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

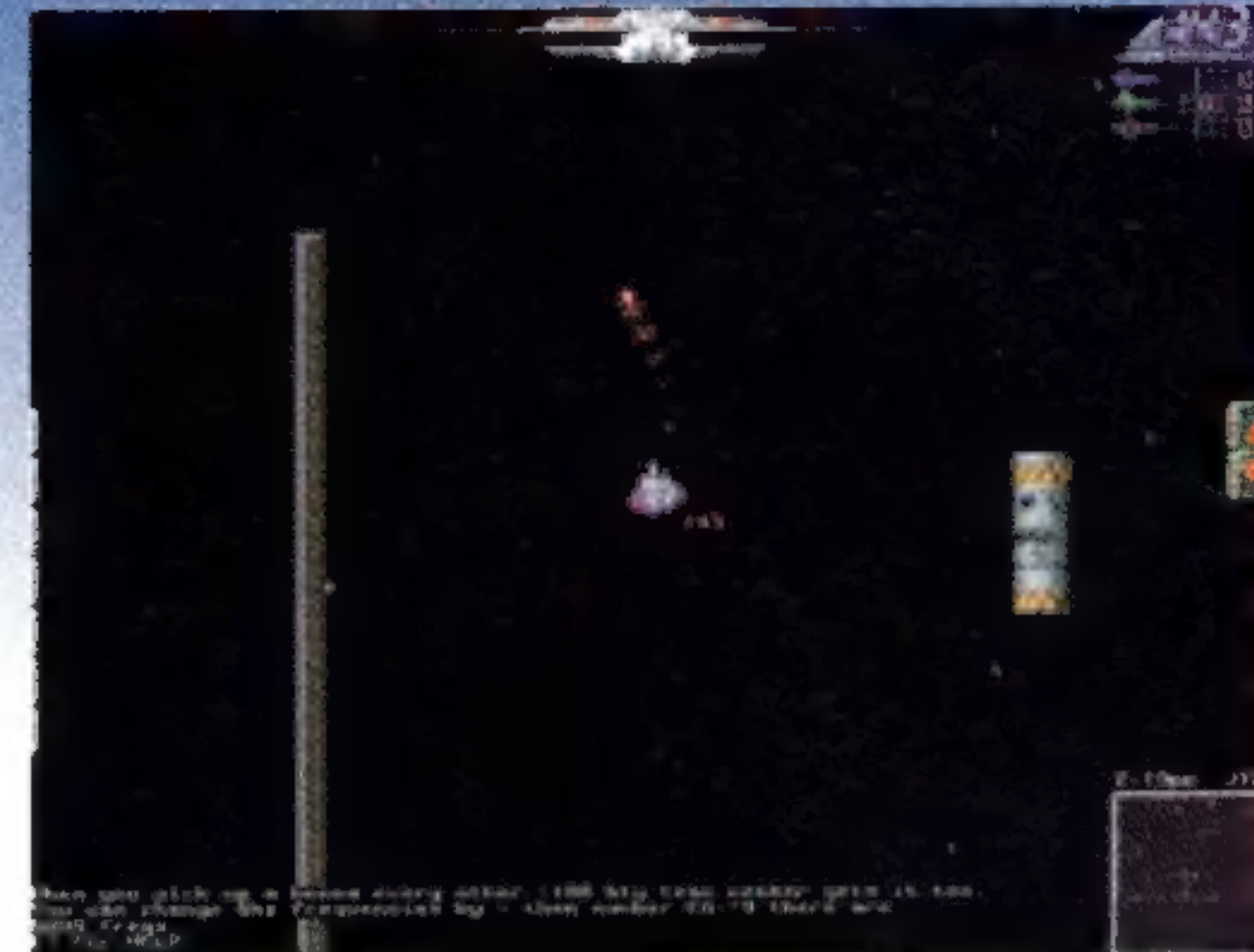


THE REAP (Take 2)

Zaxxon-style games have been thin on the ground since, er, Zaxxon really. Shoot everything that moves in this diagonally-scrolling shoot 'em up. Remember to take out all forms of human life if you want to make your alien life easier, and there are power ups to make the destruction all the more sweeter.

Controls: Keyboard

Player 1	
↑ ← ↓ →	Movement
CTRL	Shoot
Player 2	
A - D - W - S	movement
SHIFT	Shoot
P	Pause



SUBSPACE (VIE)

Take the classic arcade game Asteroids but take out some of the asteroids. Chuck in a load of players gathered from the Internet, thrust your way around some simple maps, and you have a devilishly simple but incredibly fun space combat game. You can choose from a variety of ships and collect power ups along the way. Access in-game help by pressing F1, or check out www.vie.com for more details on how to run the software.



NHL POWERPLAY 98 (VIE)

It may not be the most popular sport in this country, but Ice Hockey has to be the most violent fun you can have without being arrested. Try out an exhibition match in Virgin's latest attempt at snatching EA's crown. You can play either in 3D or a top-down 2D view. We suggest you use a joystick as the key control can be a bit fiddly. See the README file for more details.

Controls: Joypad/keyboard



NBA FULL COURT PRESS (Microsoft)

You don't have to be exceedingly tall to play this game. Microsoft's Basketball game has some lovely animation, even though this demo only runs in 256 colours. All the keys can be re-mapped from within the game. It might not be up to the standard of EA



“What are you waiting for?”

TOMB RAIDER II™

STARRING
LARA CROFT

“...Tomb Raider II renders everything else prosaic and dull.”

Official PlayStation Magazine

“We know what game you are really waiting for. We know the others are just filling time until its arrival.”

Play

“Lara Croft exploded onto the PC late last year... now reigns supreme as the undisputed queen of action gaming. More than two million sales later and countless awards, she's back...”

PC Gamer

“The most highly anticipated sequel of the year. It's all just too good to be true. This will be the best-selling game of 1997, book your copy now.”

PlayStation Power



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EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

◀ Sport's fabulous *NBA 98*, but then it doesn't require monster hardware.

Controls: Joypad/keyboard



PAX IMPERIA: EMINENT DOMAIN (THQ)

In this strategy game you must guide the Kar'Tsoran to total victory across five star systems. There is only one opponent in this demo. Once you've chosen a name and a banner, you will enter the main control room from where you can access all areas of the game. Click on the various icons to research or control your two fleets or use the function keys. Access the README.TXT file for more information.

CONTROLS:
Mouse/keyboard



CAPTAIN CLAW (Monolith)

This side-scrolling swashbuckling platform game from the makers of *Blood* has you controlling a rat-like Errol Flynn in search of treasure and high adventure. The idea is well worn, but the gameplay is solid. Beware hitting the barrels, they explode.

Controls: Keyboard/joypad

↑	Movement
↓	Movement
←	Movement
→	Movement
Space	Jump
ALT	Projectile attack
SHIFT	Projectile toggle
Z	Throw
CTRL	Melee attack



DARK ANGEL (Vicarious Visions)

This scrolling shoot 'em up in the style of *Abuse* offers action aplenty for those of you with a nimble trigger finger. It may not be cutting edge, but it's fun for a few hours.

←	Move left
→	Move right
↑	Jump/climb up
↓	Action (enter, climb down, use lever or mechanism, use inventory object, enter a door/corridor)
HOME	Flip left (non weapons mode only)
PG UP	Flip right (non weapons mode only)
INS	Toggle between weapons/non-weapons mode
END	Cycle through available weapons
PG DN	Cycle through available superpowers
DEL	Duck
P	Pause game
T	Talk to a character
H	Use holy water on Carina
1 - 4	Select weapon
5 - 9	Select superpower
ESC	Return to main menu
F2	Take a screenshot
F5	Save a game in progress



VIRTUA FIGHTER 2 (Sega)

This graphically challenging beat 'em up conversion of the coin-op classic is ideal two-player fodder for those who like to give their mates a bit of a slapping every now and then. You can use the keyboard, but we suggest you invest in a gamepad if you want to pull off those oh-so special moves and completely kick the crap out of your opponent.

Controls: Keyboard/gamepad

W	Jump
S	Crouch
A	Back
D	Forward
Space	(Press twice quickly to dash forward and backwards)
V	Guard
G	Punch
H	Kick
F3	Pause/resume



THE NEED FOR SPEED 2 (Electronic Arts)

It may look a bit dated when compared to the likes of *Screamer Rally*, but now that they've given *TNFS2* a bit of a 3Dfx make-over, things don't look so bad. N.B. This game doesn't run from the CD, so copy the SETUP.EXE from the relevant directory on the CD to your hard drive before running the game.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

↑	Accelerate
↓	Brake
← / →	Steer
Space	Handbrake
A / Z	Gear change
C	Change view
H	Horn
ESC	Pause



NETSTORM (Activision)

Netstorm is an on-line strategy game that takes place way up in the sky, on little islands that float about on clouds. We strongly recommend you check out the tutorial, which not only teaches you how to play the game, but also tells you what all the controls are, so we won't bother printing them here then.

Controls: Mouse

NEBULA FIGHTER (One Reality)

This is a totally spoogethworthy scrolling shoot 'em up that takes us back to the halcyon days of *Xenon 2* when men were men and boys had very sore fire-button fingers. They don't make 'em like they used to. But then maybe that's not such a bad thing?

Controls: Keyboard

↑	Movement
↓	Movement
←	Movement
→	Movement
Left CTRL	Fire
Left SHIFT	Select

HD ZONE

THIS MONTH WE'VE squeezed the excellent *CM97/98* demo onto just two floppies. To access the demo, type PCZONE whilst your A: drive is current and follow the instructions to install the game onto your hard drive. If you have problems running the demo, quit to DOS mode and run the game in the usual way. This demo allows you to play half a season.

Controls: Mouse

N.B. Hit the  to accelerate a match.



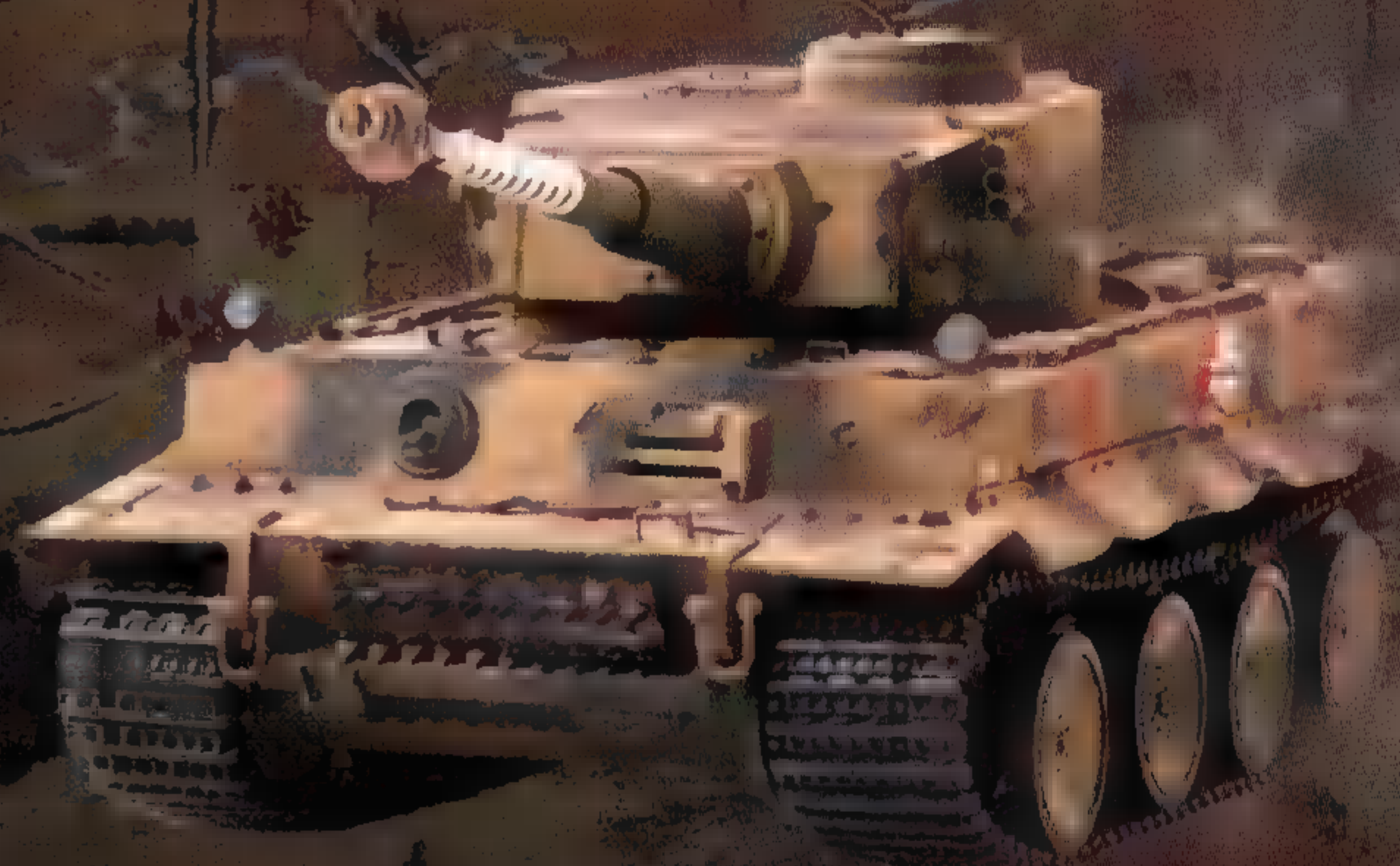
HOTSHOTS & ESSENTIALS

As well as all these fantastic EXCLUSIVE playable demos on this month's CD Zone, we've included the latest patches, essentials and preview shots of *Montezuma's Revenge*, *Incoming*, *Riot: Mobile Armour*, *Joint Tactical Fighter*, *Omikron* and *Earthsiege 3*. Simply select the tab from the browser to access them.



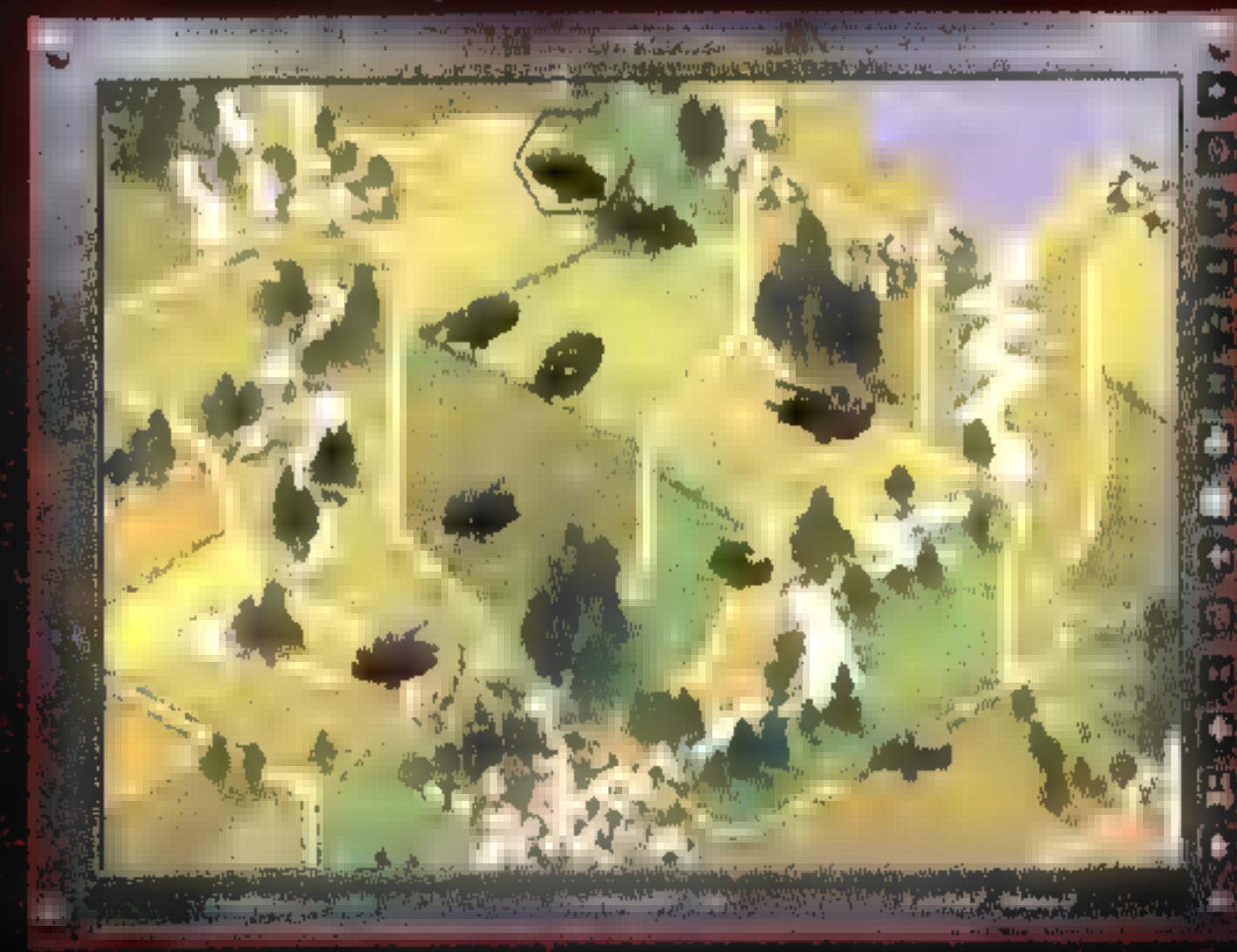
PANZER GENERAL

II



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BULLETIN

WORLD EXCLUSIVE

Evolva from computer artworks creeps in like a mutated spider.

PAGE 17



WORLD EXCLUSIVE

DID's awesome *Tank* rolls over us like, uh, a tank.

PAGE 22



TALL TAILS AND TITTLE TATTLE

The Man Who Knows.

PAGE 26



We want to believe

Details of the long awaited *X-Files* game have finally been released from Fox Interactive, who are hoping to get

DATA PAD

Shiny unveil radical new flight sim




Shiny Entertainment, die-hard surfer boys and last bastions of originality in the games industry, have just revealed plans to produce a brand new kind of flight simulator, to be released early next year.

Putting the nails in yet another non-computer related hobby's coffin, *Fly By Wire* simulates the joys and thrills associated with radio-controlled helicopters, without the large cash outlay, the nigh-on impossible task of finding an area of parkland that isn't strewn with dog turds, and the annoyance of having to call out the fire brigade to rescue your chopper from a particularly large tree.

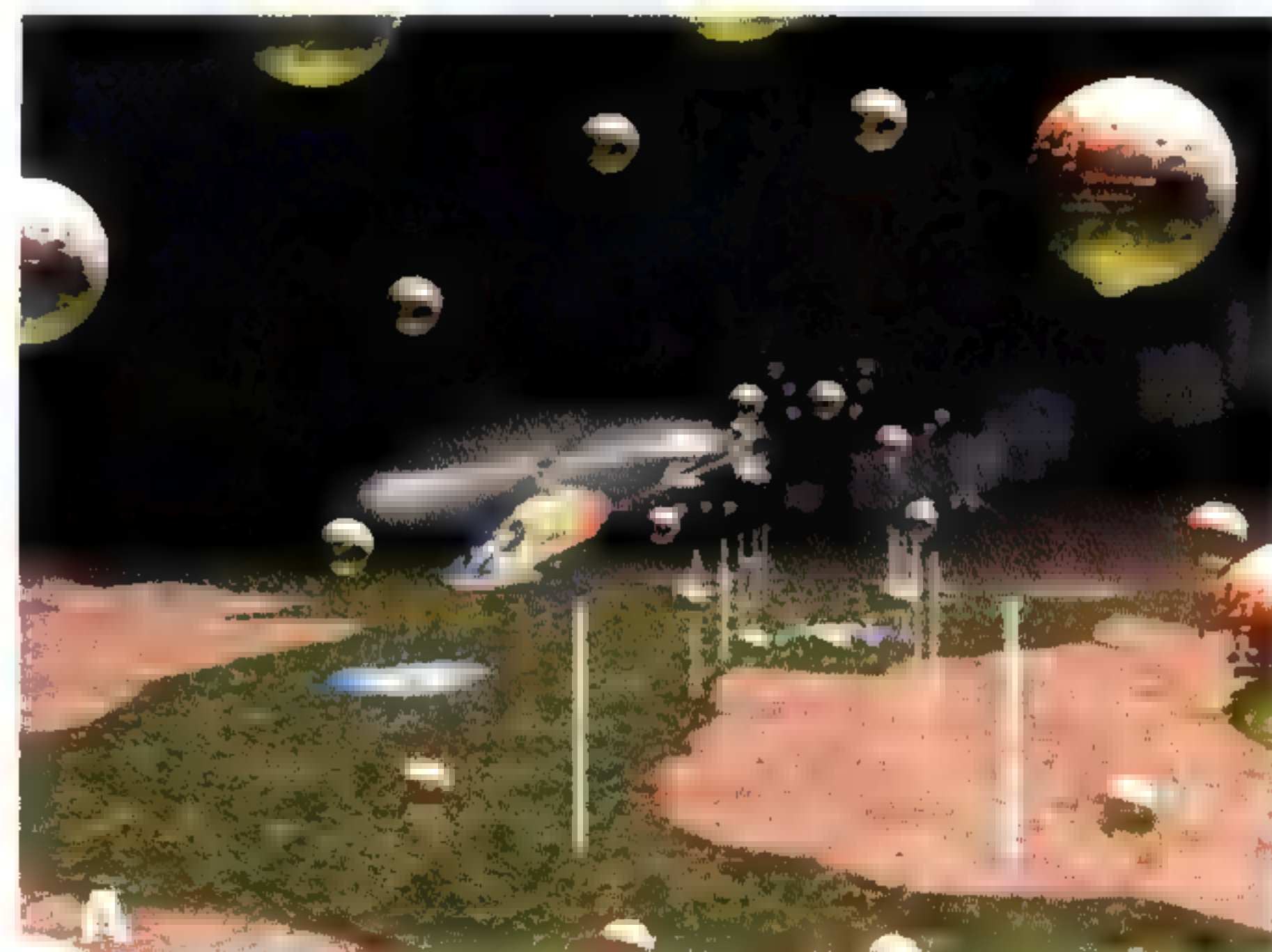
Players are able to pilot their way around narrow canyons, over tricky obstacle courses and are even able to perform all manner of daring aerial stunts – including landing on moving vehicles. And what's more, all this excitement is carried out in a photo-realistic, 3Dfx-compatible terrain.

The game boasts some of the most accurate flight dynamics ever seen in a helicopter sim, and to further enhance the effect, is compatible with the new breed of dual-analogue controllers. There have even been rumours floating around that Shiny are working in conjunction with a hardware manufacturer to build a proper radio-controller device specifically for *Fly By Wire*.




Ominously, no publishing deal has been signed for the game yet, with Shiny having funded the entire development costs by themselves – a move that further proves the theory that MDK recently made the company rather a lot of damn money. For more information contact www.shiny.com 

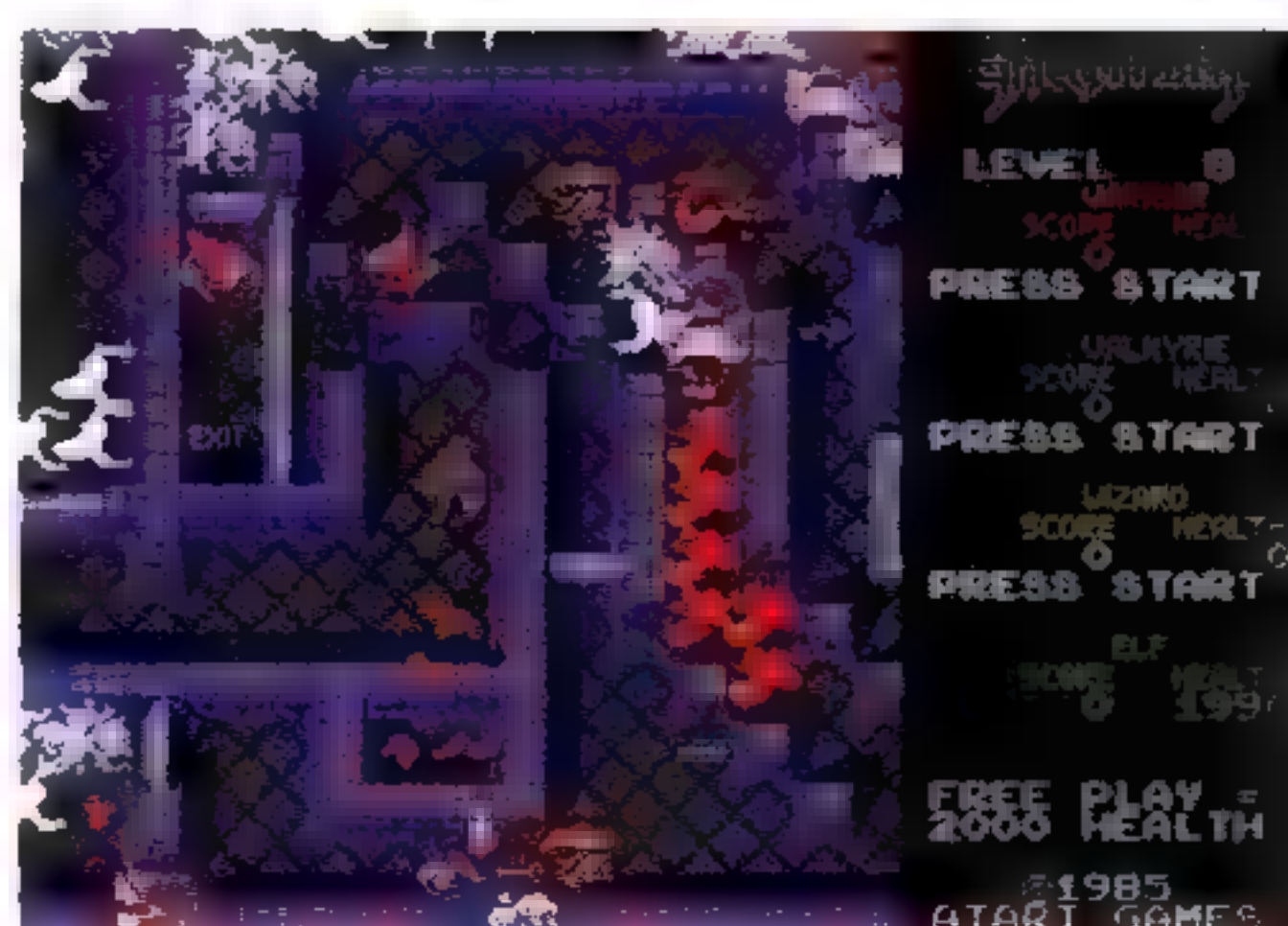
(All) Shiny Entertainment branch out with a remote control helicopter sim. And there's the remote control helicopter. Cute ain't it?



© 1985 Atari Games

Hexplore, a 3D role-playing adventure on the books at Infogrames, was initially going to be the tale of a secret brotherhood of dark sorcerers searching for a sacred book in the hallowed grounds of the Garden of Eden. Four heroes united against one evil. But this is now not the case. Things have changed at Infogrames since they acquired the licence to Atari's 1985 arcade classic *Gauntlet*

brand. The whole game is being given a *Gauntlet* facelift in fact, which will involve the inclusion of all the original characters, monsters and weapons (do you remember them?). Into this little bargain, *Gauntlet* will retain *Hexplore*'s graphical splendour, depth and multi-player prowess. We reckon you should look out for an early to mid '98 release. Best save a few dollars for that then. 



(Left) The classic *Gauntlet* arcade game. (Right) Will the new *Gauntlet* follow suit and impress us all?

the game into shops for May '98. This will no doubt be the closest any of us will ever get to interacting with Gillian Anderson, apart from in our sordid little daydreams. The game is to feature all of our favourite

characters, including The Lone Gunmen, Skinner and X, as well as the ol' chain-smoking hamster-cheeked man that we know and love. Players will control a wet-behind-the-ears FBI agent helping Mulder

and Scully as they unearth strange goings-on in many interesting cases. Chris Carter, the show's creator, has had a hand in the development of the game, so expect a peachy keen storyline and a suitably moody

cinematic feel. A newly-developed engine called 'Virtual Cinema' has also been developed by Fox, allowing players to interview witnesses, examine gooey stuff and chat to Mulder and Scully for advice.




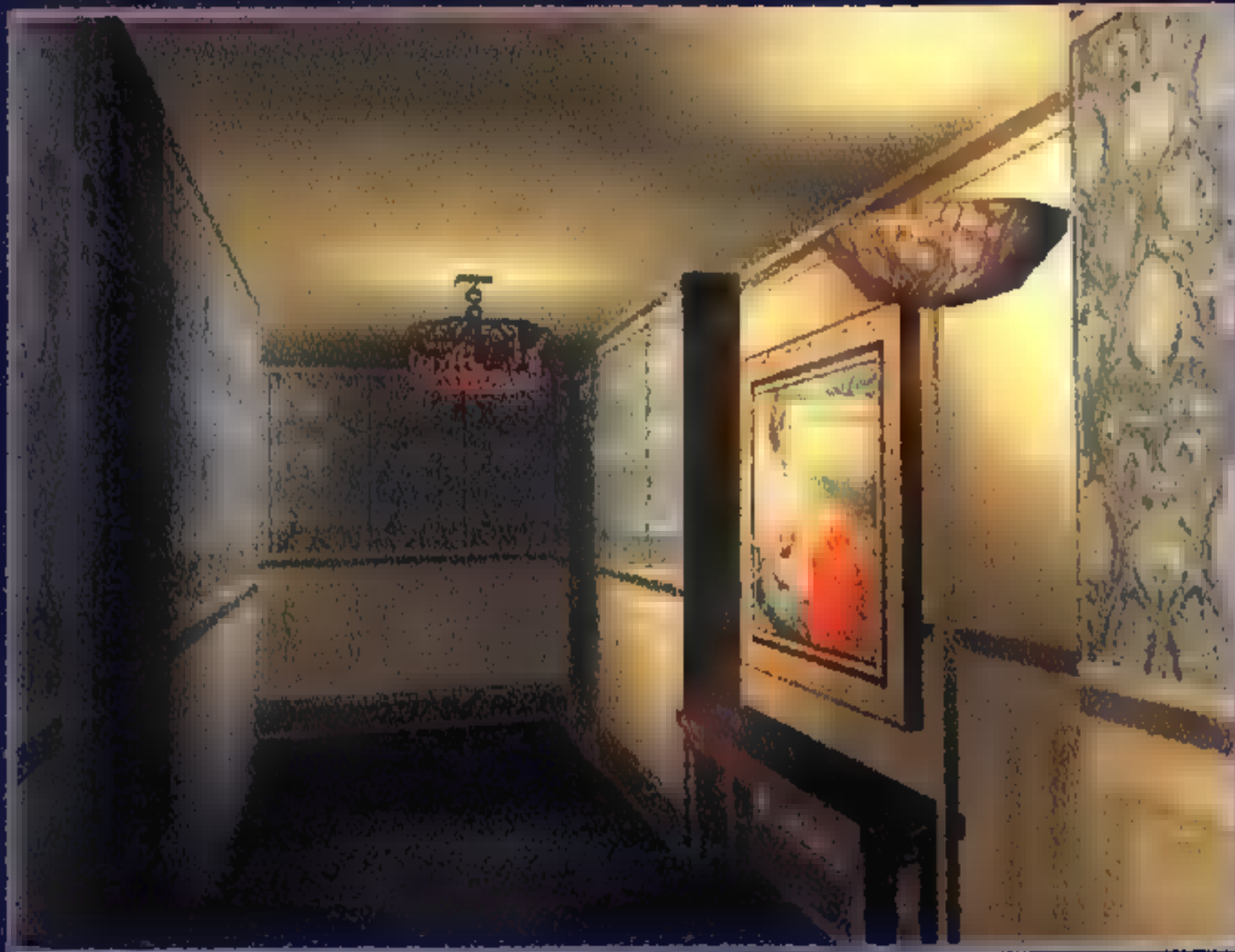
Gabriel Knight changes perspective

More news from the 'Keep Tim Curry Out Of Work' desk.

The company formerly known as Sierra are getting down to work on *Gabriel Knight 3 - Blood of the Sacred*, third instalment in the spooky paranormal investigation series that wouldn't have made it this far if *The X-Files* hadn't been such a success (you cheeky git, GK is a blue-men good series - Ed).

Ditching the point-and-click adventure elements that, er, made the previous two so popular, GK3 instead uses a 3D first-person Quake-style engine that, according to Sierra, "allows you to interact with intelligent, life-like characters who have fluid animations as never before seen in a real-time game." Which is, like, groovy man.

Porn star soundalike Jane Jensen, GK3's designer, describes the move away from traditional adventure elements as being, "much more effective from an interactivity point of view. You'll be in traditional adventure game environments, but instead of being locked into static shots of the room, you'll be able to move the camera freely at any time." A little bit like *Under A Killing Moon* then? "Other games have done this, sure, but the best part for me is being able to fly the camera about during the story and dialogue scenes. It's like being a director." *Blood of the Sacred* is still in an embryonic stage of development at the moment, and as a consequence won't be available till the Summer of '98. 




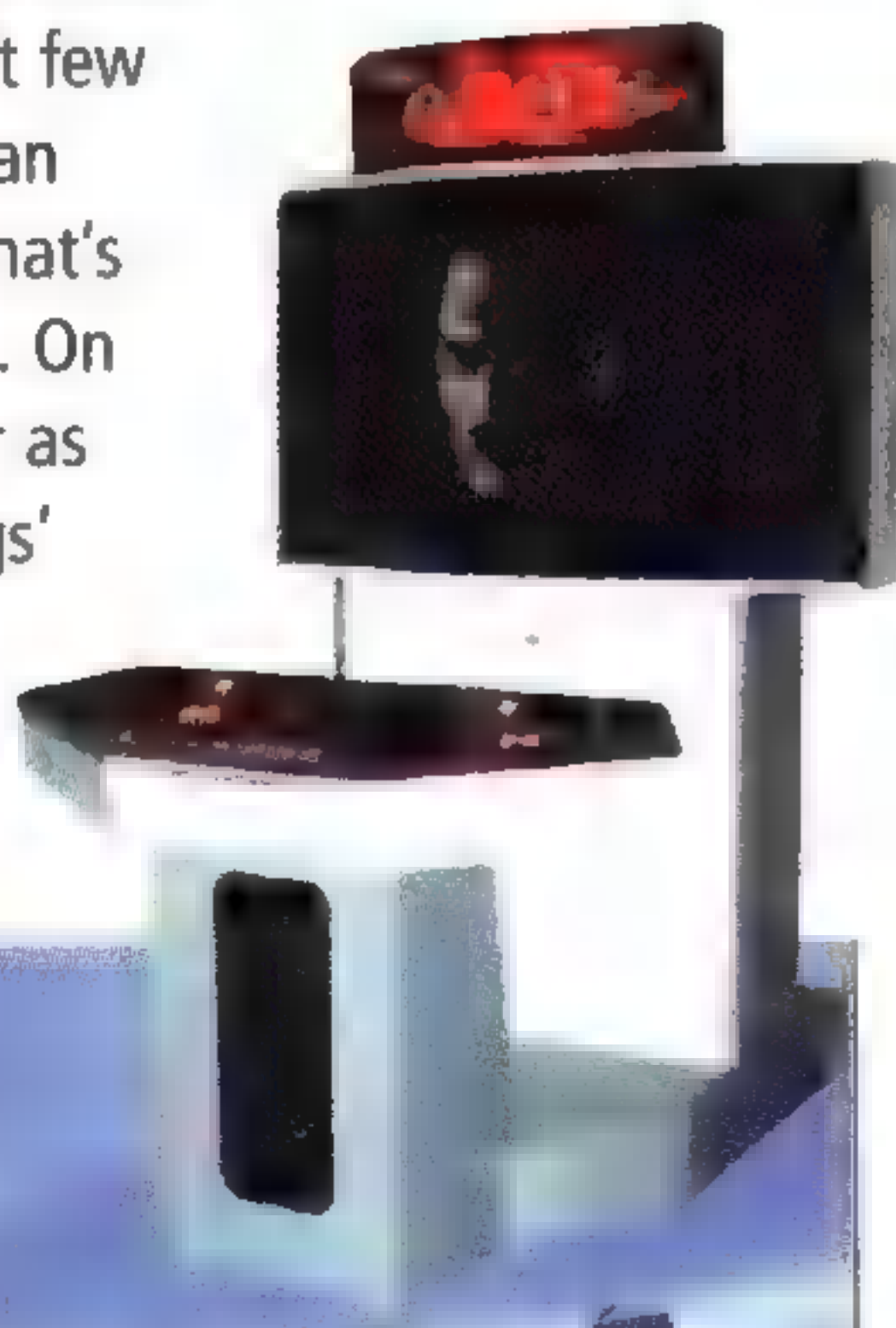
(Left) Actual in-game screenshot! (Above) A great piece of concept art.

Kalisto unveil Ultimate Race Pro


Kalisto are currently putting the finishing touches to *Ultimate Race Pro* - the home version of their wickedly good PowerVR-driven racing game, which will be released through MicroProse in time for Christmas.

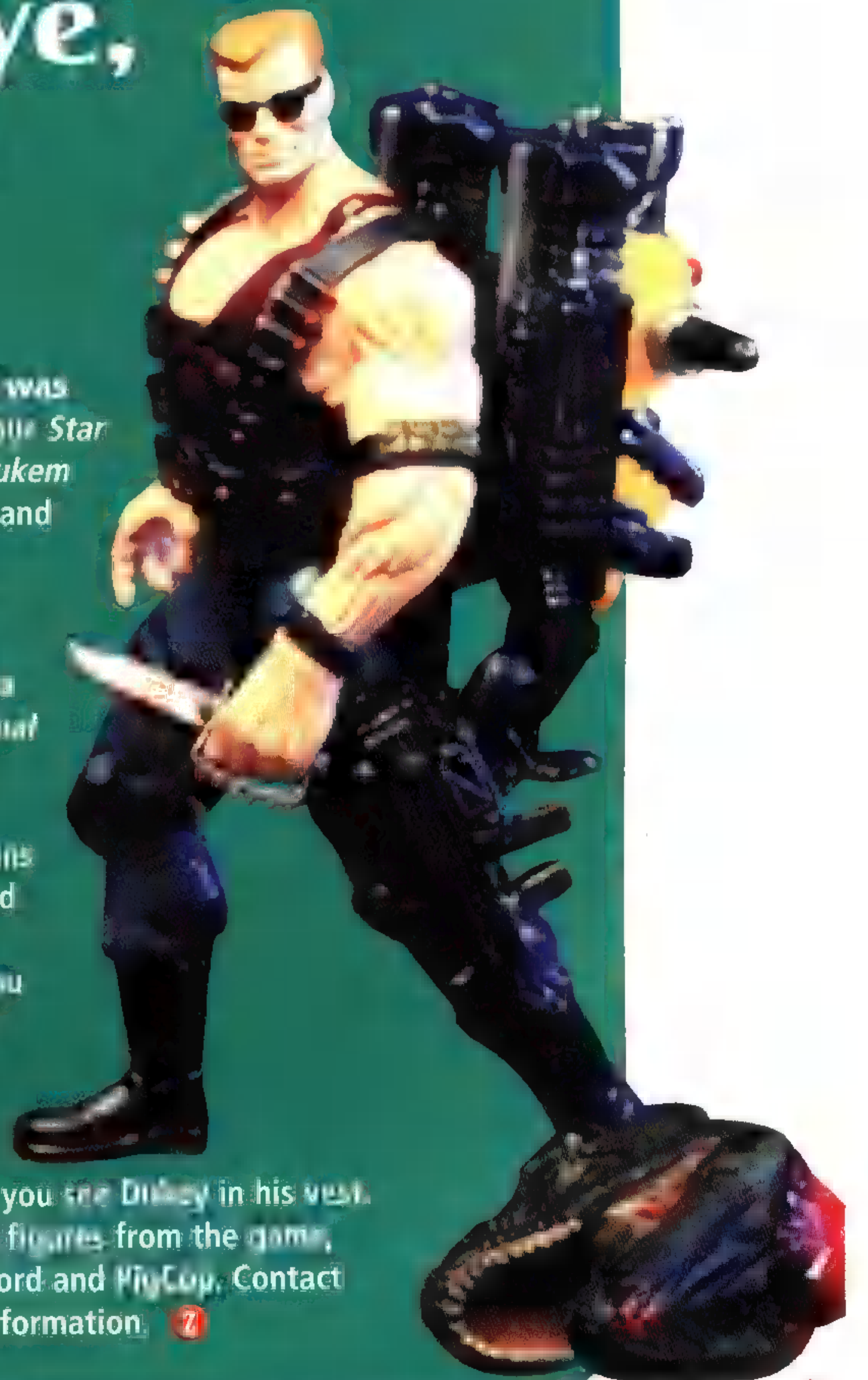
Regular readers may have seen a few *Ultimate Race* bits and bobs scattered about this fine tome over the past few months, but this new version contains much more than previous versions. There are now 16 tracks in total (that's 15 more than previously...) and a multi-player arena. On top of this, *Ultimate Race Pro* is also due to appear as an Hanaho Arcade PC unit, along with Inner Workings' *Plane Crazy*, at some point in the new year.

Head to www.ultimaterace.com if you need to empty your back wheels somewhere. 



Kiss your ass goodbye, Action Man

Just when you thought it was safe to start playing with your *Star Wars* figures again, Duke Nukem arrives to miniaturise them and tramp them to death. Yes, Duke Nukem action figures are available now. Each Duke figure will come with a shareware version of *Terminal Velocity* and a selection of weapons, including a Devastator, two machine guns and a knife. Internet-ordered figures will also have a Freeze Thrower. If you thought Action Man looked like a gay cunt in his combat trousers, big boots and gym-toned musculature, you wait until you see Duke in his vest. Also coming soon are other figures from the game, including Octabrain, Battlelord and PigCop. Contact www.3drealms.com for information. 



Ooh aah, chess a little bit

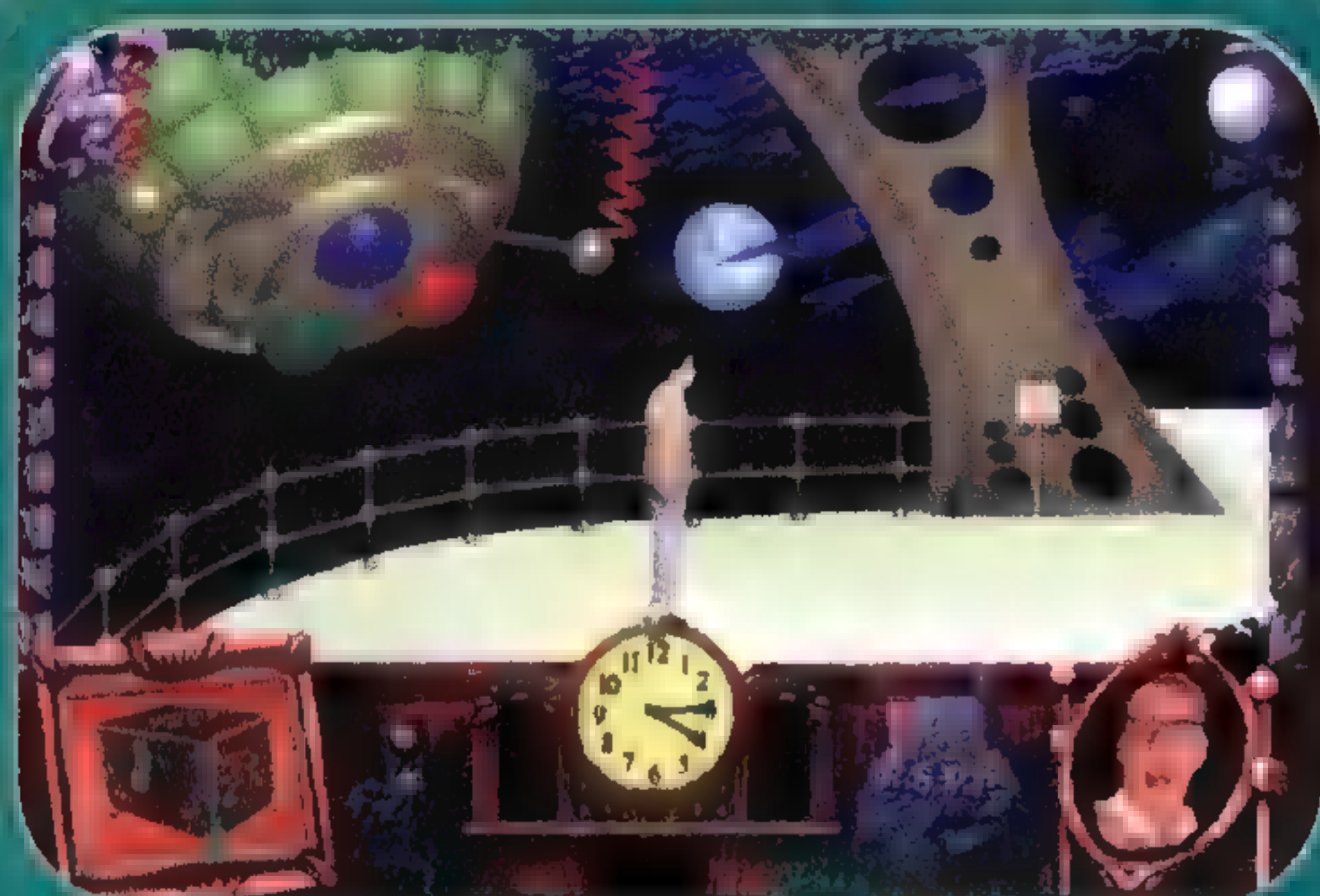
Mindscape are gearing up for the release of *Chessmaster 5500*, the latest in their popular series of programs dealing with,

you know, chess. It will have an improved engine, prettier graphics, a highly necessary Internet play mode, and some comprehensive spoken commentary, which will do its utmost to distract your attention

from the fact that you're playing a game favoured by bearded outcasts. We're even promised a 'Synapse Map', a graphical objet d'art which allows players to "take a peek into the mind of the chessmaster".

The only feature missing is the ability to knock the pieces off the table and hammer your opponent in the face with a shoe. *Chessmaster 5500* is out now at £44.99. For information: www.mindscapeuk.com.

DATA PAD



Real Horrorshow

Fond of sitting at your computer in fishnet stockings and wearing a lasque? (And we don't mean the diminutive Northern Spanish people before you start). If so, you could well be among the target audience for *The Rocky Horror Show Interactive*. If, on the other hand, you thought the *Rocky Horror Show* was an apposite description of the series of Sylvester Stallone films, you're probably not. Inevitably, the 'game' will feature Richard O'Brien, as the devil. Christopher Lee, who we all thought was dead, will be doing the saucy narration throughout. And the game will no doubt be as cutting edge, funny and outrageous as the musical itself.

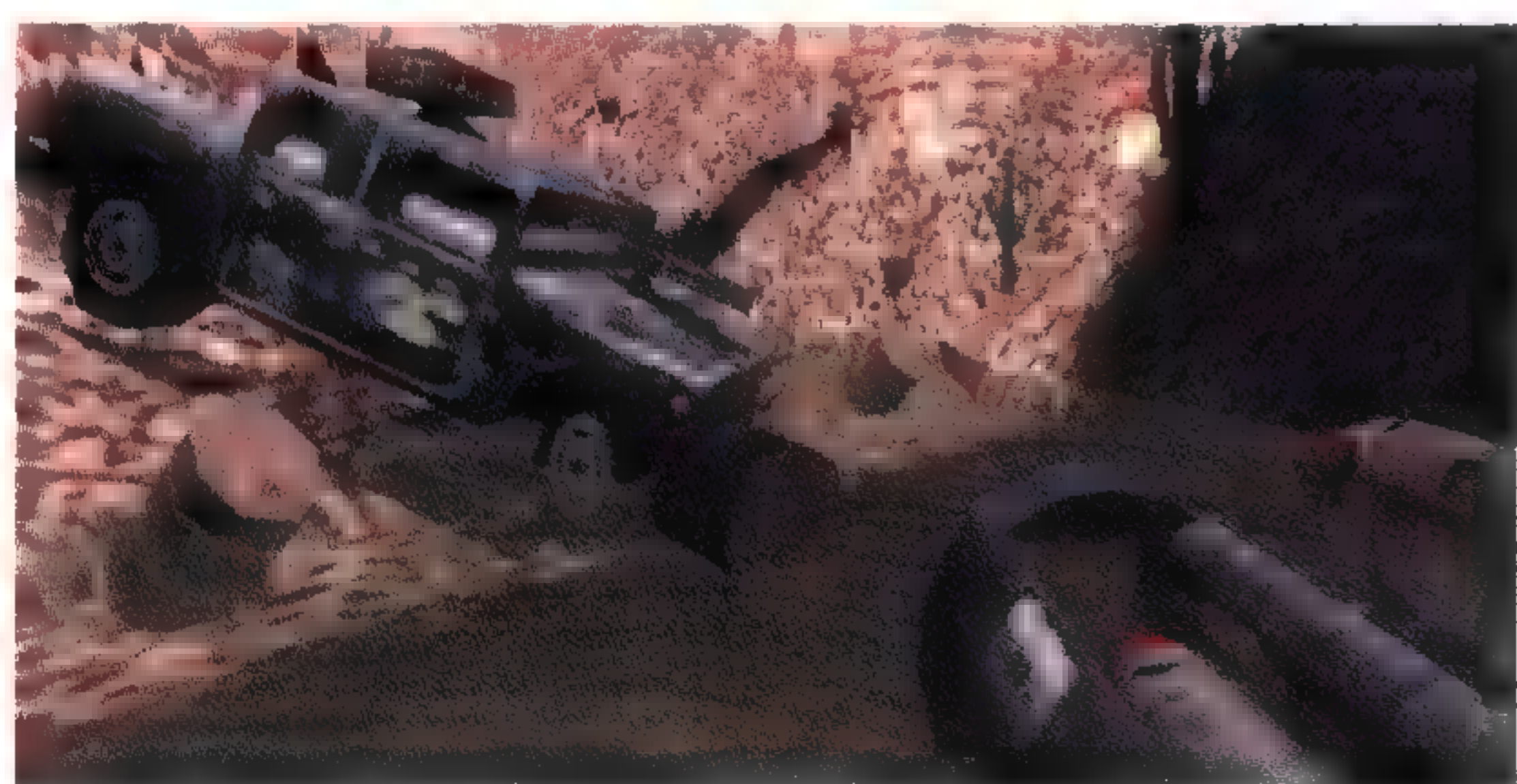
For more *Rocky Horror* action, tune in and turn on at www.on-line.co.uk.



Duke four, and Duke five!

This new shot from *Duke Nukem Forever* recently appeared all over the World Wide Web and is now appearing any and everywhere games are written about. Including here, as you may have noticed.

3D Realms have released little about the game itself, except that they have licensed the *Quake II* engine as part of the project. GT Interactive, the publishing company working in conjunction with 3D Realms on *Duke Forever*, have also revealed that as part of the deal they acquire rights to another future 3D Realms title, tentatively called *Duke Nukem 5*. There really is no stopping this series.



(Above) Ruddock and Redknapp posing like ponces. (Bottom right) Lambardo chills.



Please keep off the grass

Eidos spent a lot of money enticing eleven professional footballers (a "dream team") to Wembley Stadium for the launch of *Championship Manager 97/98*. We went along with a small football, mainly because we wanted to sneak onto the pitch, whack it into the net and shout "Pick that one out of the onion bag, filthy Hun."

Unfortunately the security monster who showed us around and told us to stay off the pitch was extremely large. Still, we got to see the likes of Nicolas Anelka, Tony Adams, Dennis Wise, Graham Le Saux and Peter Beardsley wandering about. (On the pitch. Bastards.)



Fight Aliens on-line

With a long history of excellence in the industry, GT Interactive have decided that now is the time to launch a new game revolutionising the way we play. It's called *Aliens Online*.

Previous attempts, such as *Aliens Vs Predator* and *Alien Trilogy* have lacked a certain lustre, so everybody bar the Pope is hoping that *Aliens Online* will be the game to finally do the license justice.

As the name suggests, *Aliens Online* is primarily a multi-player affair, designed to be played on the (cough) Information Superhighway. Up to one hundred players each don the mantle of either human Space Marine or alloy-gubbed Alien Bastard, then enter a 3D *Duke*-style environment and try to wipe each other out. The graphics are hardly cutting edge (players are represented by sprites), yet hopefully this should help keep lag to a minimum. It's not just an exercise in blasting either; Marines can develop individual skills (such as medicinal treatment or electronics), whilst on the gameplay front, watching your team-mates' backs is as essential to success as a busy trigger finger. All the best bits from the film are in place too, such as motion trackers and the little team-mate cameras, although you probably won't see Sigourney Weaver running around in her pants. A demo version of *Aliens Online* is due in December; right now, check out www.gamestorm.com for details.



Aliens Online is now available. Make sure you're ready for a stint in the...

HALF-LIFE



www.sierra.com/titles/half-life

HALF-LIFE

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angry so it hides in
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**It's the Animal
Welfare League.**

**The judge gives you
six months.**

**You pop in
a meal and switch it on.
Three minutes later
the bell rings.**

**Your cell mate is
a sixteen stone animal
rights activist.**

**But hey! You've got
two great games
for only £14.99.**

**White Label
Doubles.
Sorry.**



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the Fate of Atlantis™**

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Tentacle™**

**Rebel Assault™
X-Wing™
Collectors CD.**

Big fish, meet little fish

In a move that takes the games industry ever closer to the mega-corporation world of other media, GT Interactive

have just announced that they are to purchase MicroProse, lock, stock and barrel, thereby increasing their previously thin strategy and simulation departments considerably.

Where this move leaves MicroProse's UK base of operations is yet to be decided. Industry experts are predicting that the MicroProse name will eventually be faded out completely, with the various

product lines belonging to the company each becoming their own brand names. The move comes as GTI announce record profits and a stronger product line than ever before.

DATA PAD

Join the evolution



If Computer Artworks can do for games what they did for screen savers then *Evolva* could be the answer to all our prayers. Looks good? You should see 'em move.

Last month Charlie Brooker warbled on in Comment about how there was a distinct lack of imagination in games these days.

Computer Artworks, the people who gave us *Organic Art*, have broken the silence and announced *Evolva* - a game that promises great gameplay surrounded by a huge dollop of curly-wurly weirdness. Richie Shoemaker investigates.

William Latham is the Art Director at Computer Artworks: a man who's saved more screens than

Jesus has lost souls. "*Organic Art* was a stepping stone to this game. We wanted to get a product out, but really the aim was to build up our 3D expertise. What we didn't realise is just how popular it would be. In *Evolva* we're creating a world people can believe in. It has its own logic. It's quite psychedelic in parts but it'll be a fascinating place."

So what is *Evolva* all about then? The guys obviously didn't want to pigeonhole the game, but *Quake* and *C&C* both

provide a handy reference point. Add a dose of genetic mutation and you may be half way there.

"There will be a full 3D environment but with a strategic angle too," says Mark Atkinson, lead programmer. "Working on two different levels, you can follow different strategies, depending on how your creatures have evolved. Whereas in normal strategy games you acquire new units at pre-defined points in the game, in *Evolva* the power-up path is variable. All the attributes will be customisable. If you put one thing up, something else goes down. You evolve the attribute combination that you like."

William agrees: "It's a 3D world where all the creatures will be living, complete with the unpredictability that exists in a natural world. Each game will be unique. Everything will go about a routine specific to its evolution - its physical attributes will affect its behaviour, and so on. Something that is very fast may act very nervous if it has little in the way of protection."




These creepies don't just crawl, some of them pack some serious heat. Expect to see organic spore missiles and scorpion style stings. Nasty.

Mark continues: "Even though there will be an underlying structure to the game, it won't be anywhere near as obvious to the player. There will be things going on all around you and you will have to try and exploit these processes. The mutation side of the game will be like a shop where you get variants of your creature presented to you. Progression will be more like an RPG: none of this going back to the start as happens in *C&C* levels." We can also expect puzzle elements affecting the environment to produce landslides to defeat opponents.

At the moment there are many features yet to be implemented. What is obvious already is that the graphics will be pant-wettingly gorgeous. It's an area William Latham has thought long and hard about.

"Our skill is getting the art and the technology together. We don't develop the graphics and programming in isolation. Everyone works closely together." One thing's for sure: at Computer Artworks they get more light in the office than here at *PC Zone*. They all look pretty healthy. It's just not right.

With ex-Bullfrog coder Vince Farquharson, *Organic Art* veteran Chris Jones and Andy Bigos from 3D Labs, the talent to carry through these ideas is definitely there. And with top sideburn modeller William Latham heading the team, we can all rest assured that Charlie's 'Wild World of Weird' is indeed on its way back. Hoo-bloody-rah! 



Limited.

Actual screen shot from Microsoft Flight Simulator 6.0

Unlimited.

Actual screen shot from Looking Glass' Flight Unlimited II

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EIDOS
I N T E R A C T I V E

Always believe in your soul

First there was *Pirates Gold*, a sequel with an element of word-play about it. Then there was *Flying Corps Gold*, the reasoning behind



which nobody understood. Now there's *Pod Gold*, which sounds like a testicular irritation cream (or a type of Poppers - Ed), but is more likely to be influenced by the top surrealist film-maker and low-fat spread, St

Ivel Gold. Ubisoft announced that this version of *Pod* will have 16 new tracks which have appeared on their website, as well as the 16 new cars - making 32 of each. Non-web-crawlers can now stop feeling left out.

DATA PAD

Reach for the Skies

Paradigm, the military flight simulation specialists and the people behind *Pilotwings 64*, are branching out into something rather different: an on-line RPG. First-person viewed, and boasting rather better graphics than most games of this ilk, it's 3Dfx only at the moment and won't even be available in beta-testing form until the end of 1998. Instead of the usual RPG types (thief, estate agent, aromatherapist, or

whatever) the races in *Skies* will be more your dragon, pegasus, guinea-pig type of thing. There'll be spells to be learnt, found and traded with other players, and your character's appearance will alter as they gain experience and get older. Promising a massive playing area, it's an ambitious undertaking. Still, ambition worked for the ant in that song about the rubber-tree plant. 2



Skies - from the team who created *Pilotwings 64* - could be described as a sort of cross between a flight sim and an RPG.

HOT Line

Tracking the hottest games and their current release dates

Men In Black (Gremlin Interactive)
Quake II (id)
Tomb Raider 2 (Core Design)

Blade Runner (Westwood Studios)
Grand Theft Auto (BMG Interactive)
HEDZ (Hasbro)
Populous 3 (EA)
Sensible Soccer 2000 (GT Interactive)
Starcraft (Sierra)

The Dark Project (Eidos Interactive)
Falcon 4.0 (MicroProse)
Star Trek: First Contact (MicroProse)
Unreal (GT Interactive)

Duke Nukem Forever (GT Interactive)
Earthworm Jim 3 (Sierra)
F1GP3 (MicroProse)
Inferno (Rage)
SimCity 3000 (Maxis)
Sin (Activision)
Ultima IX (EA)

Sentinel Returns (Polygram)
Tank (DID)
Tanktics (BMG Interactive)
The X-Files (Fox Interactive)

Civilization III (MicroProse)
Daikatana (Eidos Interactive)
Grim Fandango (LucasArts)

Blade (Gremlin Interactive)
Descent III (Interplay)
Grand Prix Legends (Sierra)

Prey (GT Interactive)

Diablo II (Blizzard)

Evolva (TBA)

TIME LINE

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY '98

FEBRUARY '98

MARCH '98

APRIL '98

MAY '98

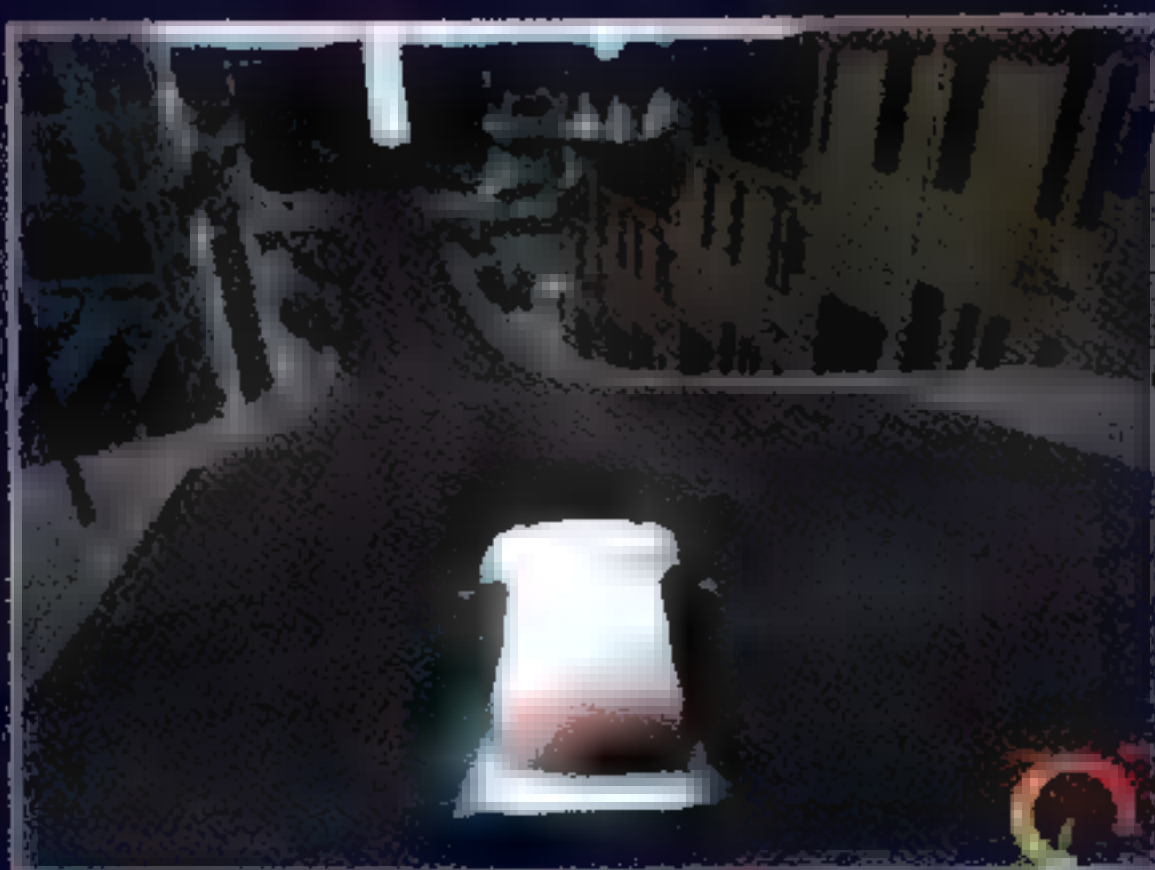
JUNE '98

JULY '98

AUGUST '98

CLIVE fronts Elite comeback

Elite have been under house arrest since the awful *Virtuoso*, but not a company to curl up and die, they've been hard at work developing a load of new games to make up for it - no less than three of which are racing games based on their new CLIVE 3D graphics engine.



KPH follows in the well-worn skid marks of *Carnageddon*, but in this instance will feature a set of Weapons thrown into the melting pot. *Ford Challenge* is a more sedate, but graphically impressive racer, which in Multiplayer Challenge mode features a four-player split screen option. The third of the trio, *Super Touring Cars*, is based upon the American Touring Car Championship and is, more or less, a more straightforward arcade racing game. All three games should feature wide 3D and multi-player support, and will hopefully be ready for review early next year.

Going off on a tangent for a moment, *The Elimination Game*, billed as "a fun shoot 'em up with subtle strategic undertones", is another Elite title which is currently being worked on. In this game the player will have access to a wide variety of vehicles in a battle against an automated defence network. Finally, *Dr Franken Jr* is an update of Elite's well-worn *Franken* brand that wound us up the first time round on the consoles. Elite say this one plays more like *LBA*, so maybe there's hope for it yet. We'll keep you posted. 2

(Top) *Super Touring Cars* is a straightforward arcade racing game. (Above left) *KPH*: another arcade racing game. (Above right) *Ford Challenge* has a Ford license behind it. So it's different. Obviously.

On the hop

Following the departure of media favourite Peter Molyneux, another member of Bullfrog has departed for pastures new. Stuart Black

DATA

is heading for recently-formed MuckyFoot Productions. With Lionhead also boasting a significant number of ex-Bullfrog employees on their payroll, industry watchers are wondering how this will affect the Guildford-

based developers and their future titles, including the long-awaited *Populous 3*. Sean Cooper, the *Magic Carpet* designer who defected to Virgin to work on *Heist*, has returned to Bullfrog to work on an

undisclosed *Dungeon Keeper*-related title. So at least Bullfrog can smile about that. Meanwhile MuckyFoot are said to be working on a third-person platform beat and shoot 'em up for Eidos. More news soon.

All change at Wireplay

On-line gaming service Wireplay are poised to force their way back onto the hardcore gaming scene with a number of new additions to their ever-increasing suite of supported software.

First, and most importantly, is the introduction of the classic *Quake* (a game not to be missed multi-player – by anyone), which, on average, clocks pings of 150 (on a 28.8 modem) on their service. We shit you not.

Secondly, comes *Total Annihilation* – another GT Interactive title that 'rocks' multi-player. Again, Wireplay are somehow keeping latency problems to a minimum and the game really does play like a dream.

So, with a solid Windows 95 client as the backbone of the operation, it seems that Wireplay are beginning to climb the proverbial ladder. The only way is up. **Z**



Wireplay's recently released Win 95 client is proving a real boost for the company.

Empire's new clothes



Combat Chess: a game of cunning, skill and pure violence.

Empire are bringing out three new titles in the coming months. *MiG Alley* is set in 1951, and tries to do for the Korean War what *Flying Corps* did for World War One. Like its precursor, it's a historically accurate campaign-based affair, with mini campaigns for the less patient and single missions for those of you with the great-like attention span of MTV viewers. It boasts over 50 aircraft in the air at any one time; planes on the US side include the Sabre, Shooting Star and Thunderjet (all with various F-numbers in front of them), while Commie-lovers will have the MiG 15 and cooler MiG15 bis (targeted at the bi-sexual pilot market, perhaps?). There'll be multi-player network play and radio chatter – let's hope it's not from that dick Steve Wright. *Eastern Front* is a strategy game based on the titanic USSR-v-Deutschland WWII Cup clash. Take control of either side and rise through the ranks, eating shoes and your fallen



MiG Alley will, you will be pleased to know, be full of MiGs.

comrades to stay alive in the mother of all campaigns. Then make lengthy documentaries about it. Last but not least comes *Combat Chess*, but the title's so obscure we've no way of guessing what it's all about. **Z**



Visit Virtual Springfield and win some prizes

Only the other day there we were, sitting at our desks, chewing the ends of our pencils, scratching our heads and trying to think of an idea for a competition – when we received an unexpected visit from a man from Fox Interactive who said, "F**k all that – here are some videos to give away to your f**king readers!" Which was as funny as f**k.

In fact, no, it wasn't, because that's not how it happened at all. We just called up Fox Interactive and arranged this fantastic compo giveaway without the use of any foul or abusive language whatsoever.

So, er – yeah – win some of it. A copy of *Virtual Springfield* and the new Simpsons video to be precise. Don't worry, you don't really have to do all that much. Just answer the question below and send the answer to us on the back of a postcard. Or an ironed-out tenner. Whatever you fancy really. First ten entries out of the hat get the goodies.



Q. Yeardley Smith is better known as the voice of:

1. Bart
2. Lisa
3. Homer
4. Marge

Answers on a postcard to: "Mmm, Dum-dits", PC Zone, CPC2712C, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ.

Rules: All entries to be received by 20 November 1997. No correspondence will be entered into. The editor's decision is final. **Z**



No dongle for LOL II

In our *Lands Of Lore: Guardians Of Destiny* review last issue we complained about the 'dongle' that we had to use to get our copy of the game to work, only to have Virgin then turn around and tell us that there isn't gonna be a dongle in the full retail version of the game. So we feel a bit daft. Now whose fault was it: ours for not asking them, or theirs for not telling us? You decide. **Z**



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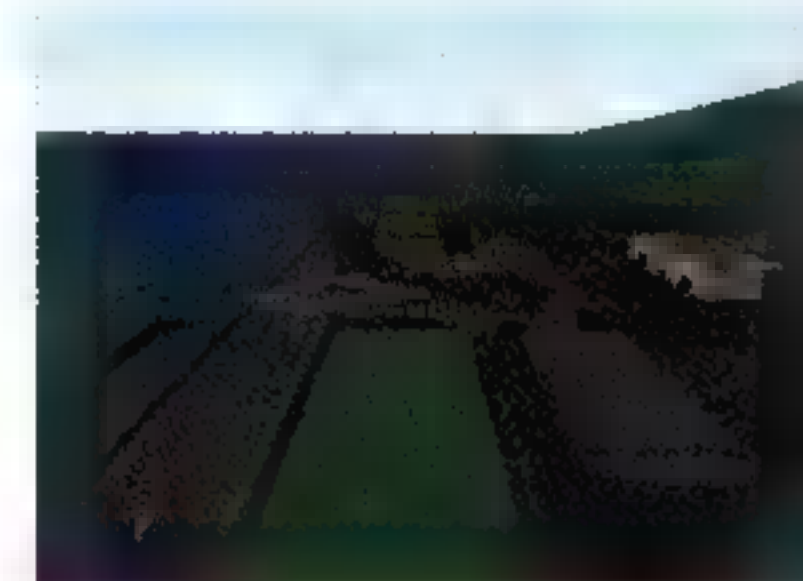
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Activision's Essential Collection

Not to be outdone in the budget game stakes, Activision are presently raiding their back catalogue, with the intention of releasing six



titles on their brand new budget range, *The Essential Collection*, in time for Christmas. Top banana will undoubtedly be *MechWarrior II*, the classic robot combat sim based on the Battletech universe. Other titles include *A-10*



DID go to war



Simulation programmers are constantly striving to achieve the 'Holy Grail' of products, and now - finally - one company looks like they're getting close. Here Warrington-based flight sim specialists, DID, give PC Zone an exclusive look at their very next project, *The Electronic Battlefield Of Tomorrow* (don't laugh).

Ever since flight sims took to the digital skies, software companies and development teams have been desperately trying to find ways of linking different products together to provide multi-player battles. Previously, the only company to even come close was Digital Integration with the *Hind* and *Apache* sims having cross-linking compatibility, but Warrington-based DID have now taken the concept to a whole new level.

"The philosophy behind this is quite straightforward," explains DID's head of everything, Martin Kenwright. "It's to create, somewhere down the line - and I'm not saying when - a fully dynamic and integrated battlefield."

Essentially, the whole shooting match (*Groan!* - Ed) starts with *EBT Tank*, a complete tank sim that contains 15 self-contained war scenarios, over half a dozen different fighting vehicles and full networking capabilities. As well as a damn fine standalone product, *EBT Tank* then expands, via the Internet, to become an ever-evolving battlefield simulator with an unlimited number of participants taking sides and jumping into their tanks. New scenarios, vehicles and engines are to be released constantly as data disks, which the user orders via the Net. "Once we've got this level of technology,



DID don't have company cars - they have company tanks. Here's Martin Kenwright's little run-around.

I don't see the point in paying £30 for a new product when people can spend just £5-£10 upgrading it," says Kenwright. These upgrades include different tanks and ground vehicles, helicopters, jets, and even, potentially, ground troops. "Let's just say you can't have a virtual battlefield without virtual people on it," he grins.

Scenarios are also planned to be released at regular points, many depending on real-world events. "It's a system that will really expand for the future," explains Kenwright. "We can take data from any part of the world and include it. We're trying to get 'n' number of users in this virtual battlefield. 'Real World' simulation data is becoming more and more complex at the moment, and when the space shuttle goes up next year we'll have the capability to recreate any part of it with amazing accuracy. Who knows, we

***Tank* looks absolutely marvellous. DID are rightly proud of their *EBT* physics engine - you should see those tanks move!**

might even do London City Centre!"

Technically, *Tank* is easily as good looking as their forthcoming *F22* sim (see blueprint on page 58), if not more so. "We've currently taken a seven square mile world down to a resolution of millimetres. You know, blades of grass, flowers on the ground and so on," boasts Kenwright. "The whole idea is that the ground will start out as a nice clean field, and after an hour will become a mudbath. It'll be destroyed. There'll be blood and guts and snot... We want to make the Sam Peckinpah of tank sims. As tanks go roaring past you, they'll splat up blood, they'll crack the windscreens, blood will wipe over the windows. You can even blow the shit out of cows in this."

EBT Tank is scheduled for a March release but Kenwright plans to have an online-only version ready by the end of 1997. Naturally, you can rely on *Zone* to keep you updated on their progress. **Z**



Cuba!, Shanghai Great Moments, Zork Nemesis, Earthworm Jim and the fabulous C64 Action Pack. Expect to see Spycraft, Pitfall, Hyperblade and Muppet Treasure Island hit the shelves at the end of January, with more titles to follow

in February. All the titles in *The Essential Collection* will retail for a very reasonable £9.99. Check out the Activision Website for more information – you'll find it at: www.activision.co.uk.

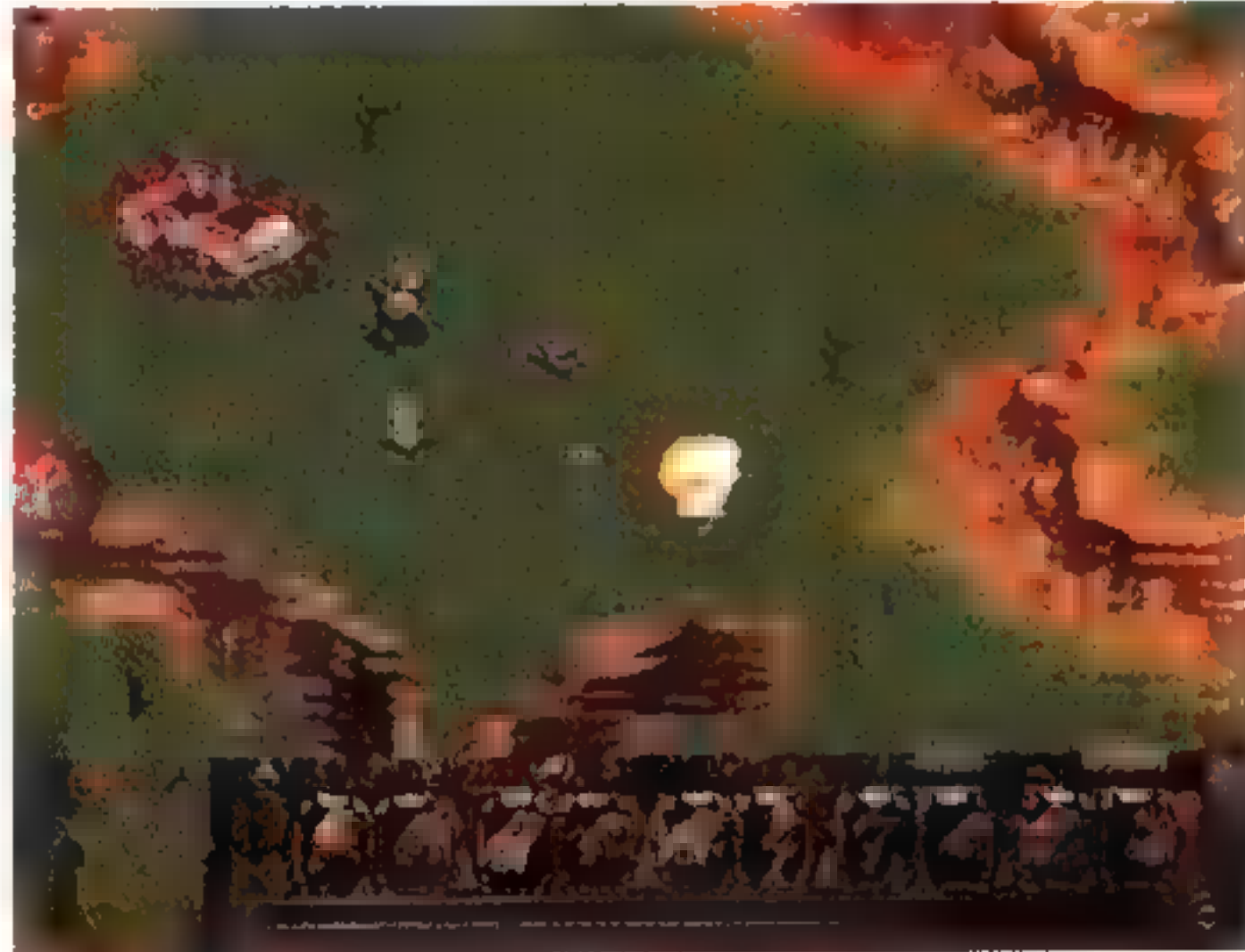
Ion Storm's first game not Daikatana

It seems that almost every software company has not only their own first-person shoot 'em up, but their own real-time strategy title in the pipeline at the moment – and not to be left out, Ion Storm plan to enter the real-time strategy arena early next year with a game called *Dominion*.

Some of you may have heard about this game before (it was Todd Porter's lead project while working as a game designer at 7th Level). Now, with 7th

Level having 'withdrawn' from the hardcore gaming scene (well, they never could get it right), and Porter currently occupying a lead design role at Ion Storm, the game has miraculously switched publishers and is now on target to become Ion Storm's first ever full game release. Eidos tell us that *Dominion* is due to come out in March.

For more information have a look at www.ionstorm.com. **Z**



Swapping publishers: Ion Storm's forthcoming *Dominion* used to be with 7th Level.

All done with mirrors



Details of a new game called

Set in the fantasy world of Uruk, *Lords Of Magic* is described by Sierra as a kind of turn-based affair which features a large number of units to control over land,

sea and air. There will also be eight kinds of magic and a resource management element that encompasses research, city management, trading and alliance building. Each player will be able to choose their race, from either Human, Barbarian, Elf or Dark Elf, and can select either Wizard, Warrior or Thief as their character class.

Balkoth the Destroyer is the game's archetypal 'boo-hiss – look behind you' character; every level can be played alone – in search of total world domination – or alternatively with other players, as a team, to thwart this dastardly boulder's evil plans.

Lords Of Magic will also feature a full rotatey 3D map, as well as a 'terraforming' feature, whereby natural disasters and magic spells are able to drastically alter the landscape during play. For more details check out Sierra.com. **Z**



Lords of Magic meets Balkoth the Destroyer

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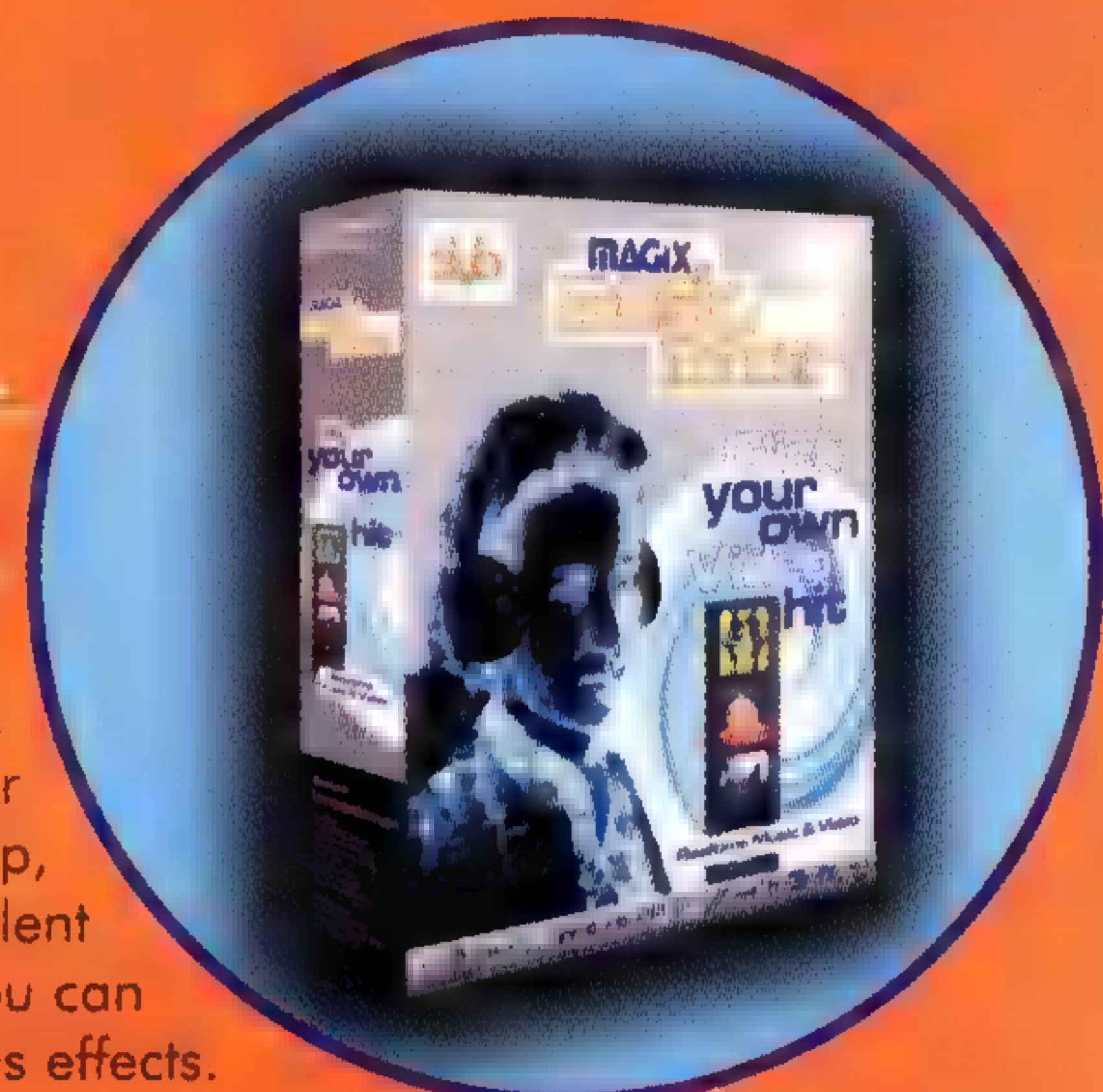


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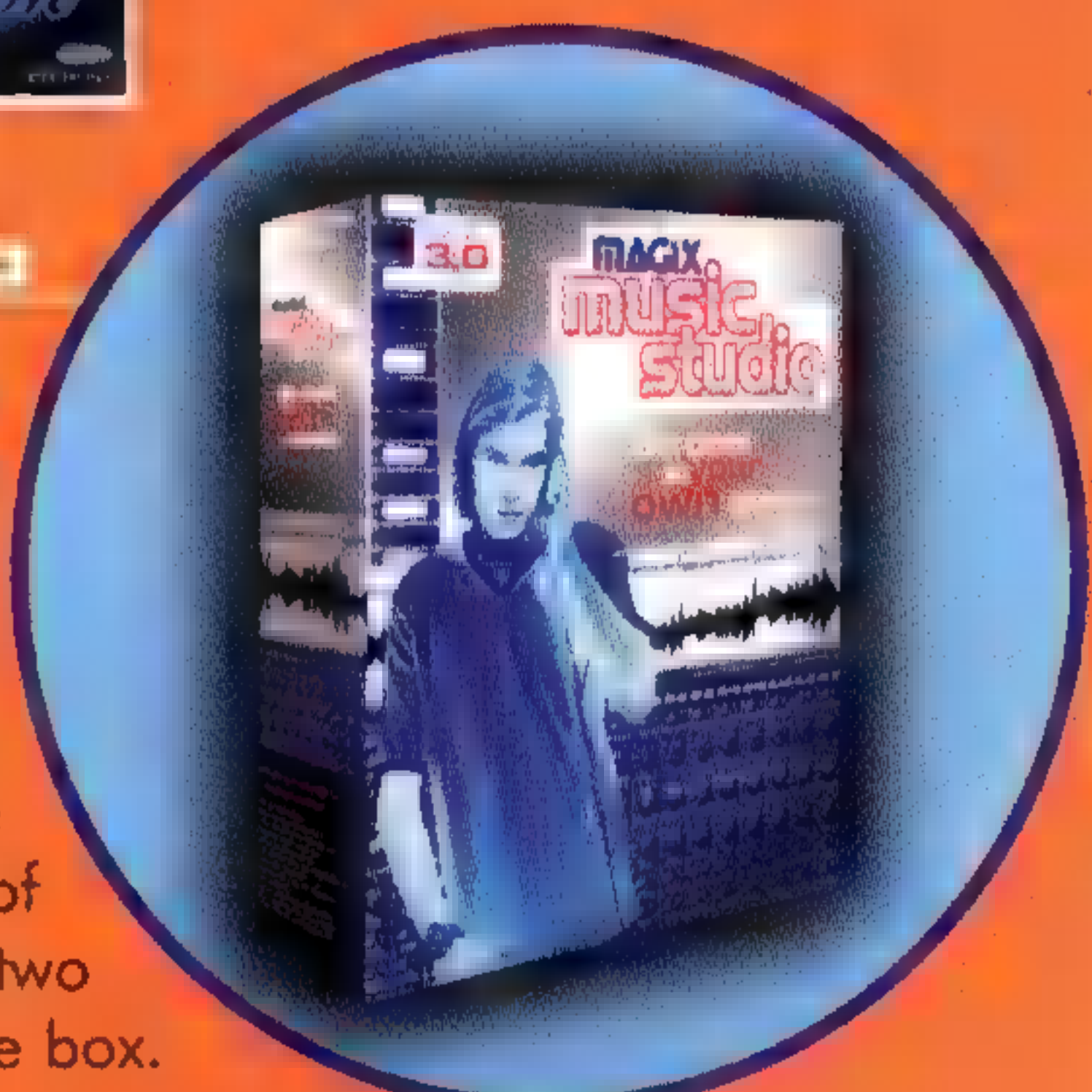


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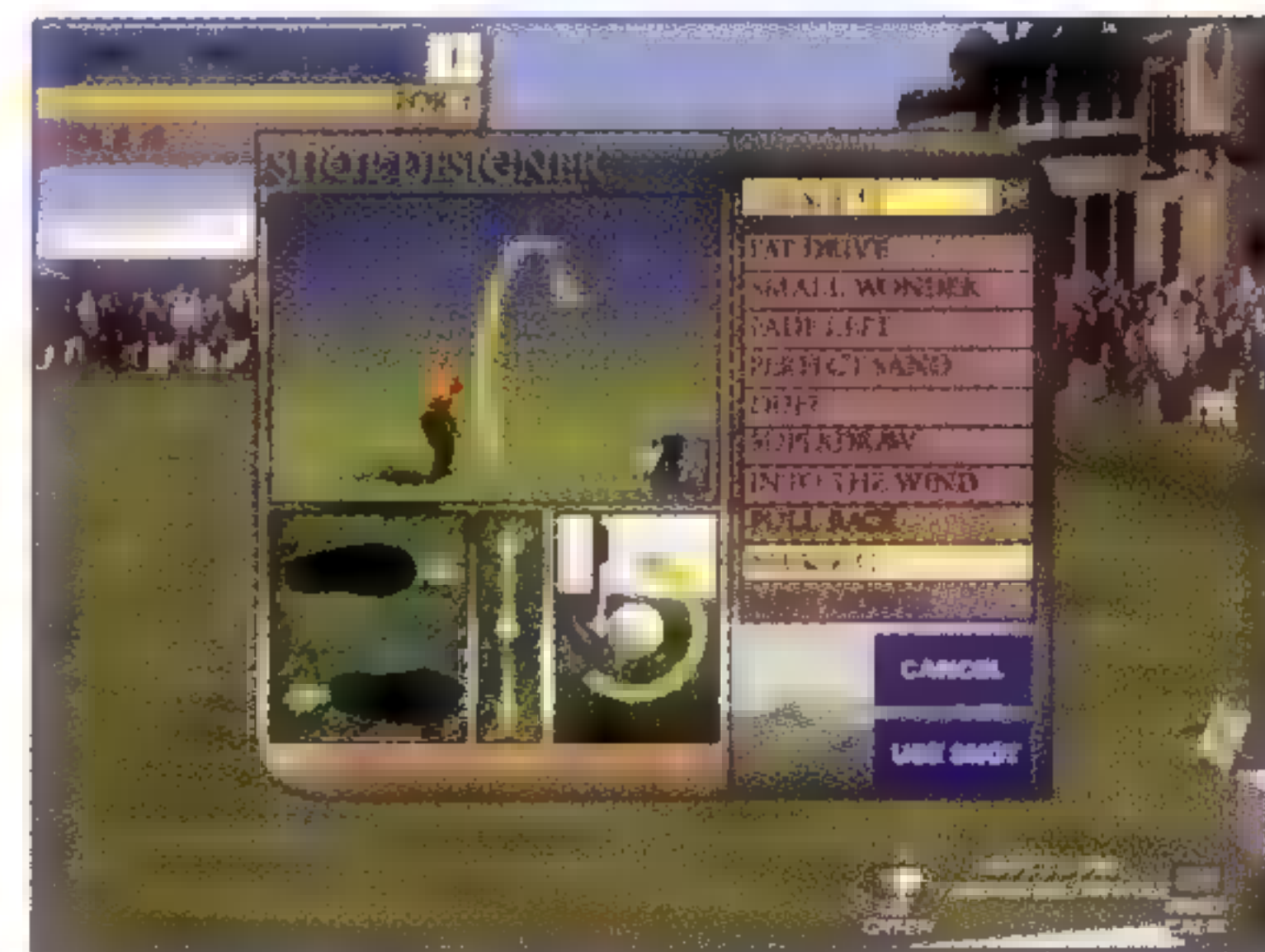


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Top of the food chain

A report issued recently by industry analysts Plimsoll Publishing ("We've got our feet on the pulse!" (fantastic

motto, boys...) has revealed that the three most successful companies in the UK games industry last year were (in order): Activision with a whopping 94% sales growth, Gremlin Interactive

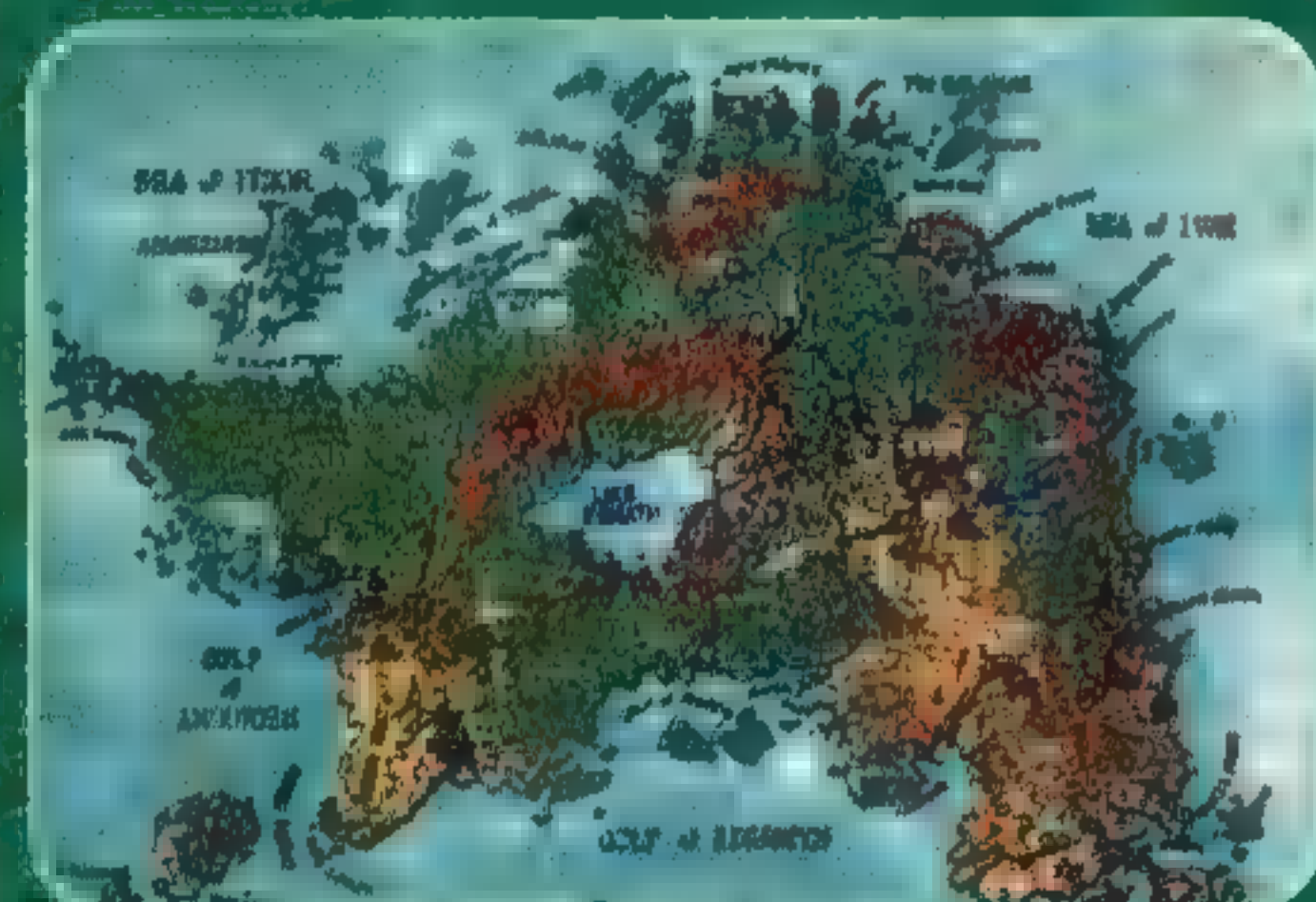
with a 50% growth, and EA, who were just pipped with a still-pretty-hefty 49%. These figures are even more surprising when you consider that a) the average sales growth for

the whole industry last year was just 7.4% and b) none of these three companies have actually released any games that featured large-breasted heroines recently.

DATA PAD

Auran comes to Hârn

Exciting news for fluffy hoods: Dark Reign developers Auran have signed an exclusive deal with RPG-specialists Columbia Games to produce a brand new range of titles based on the popular Hârn tabletop system. Popular



Hârn: a place where goblins are fought and dice are rolled. With shit pictures.

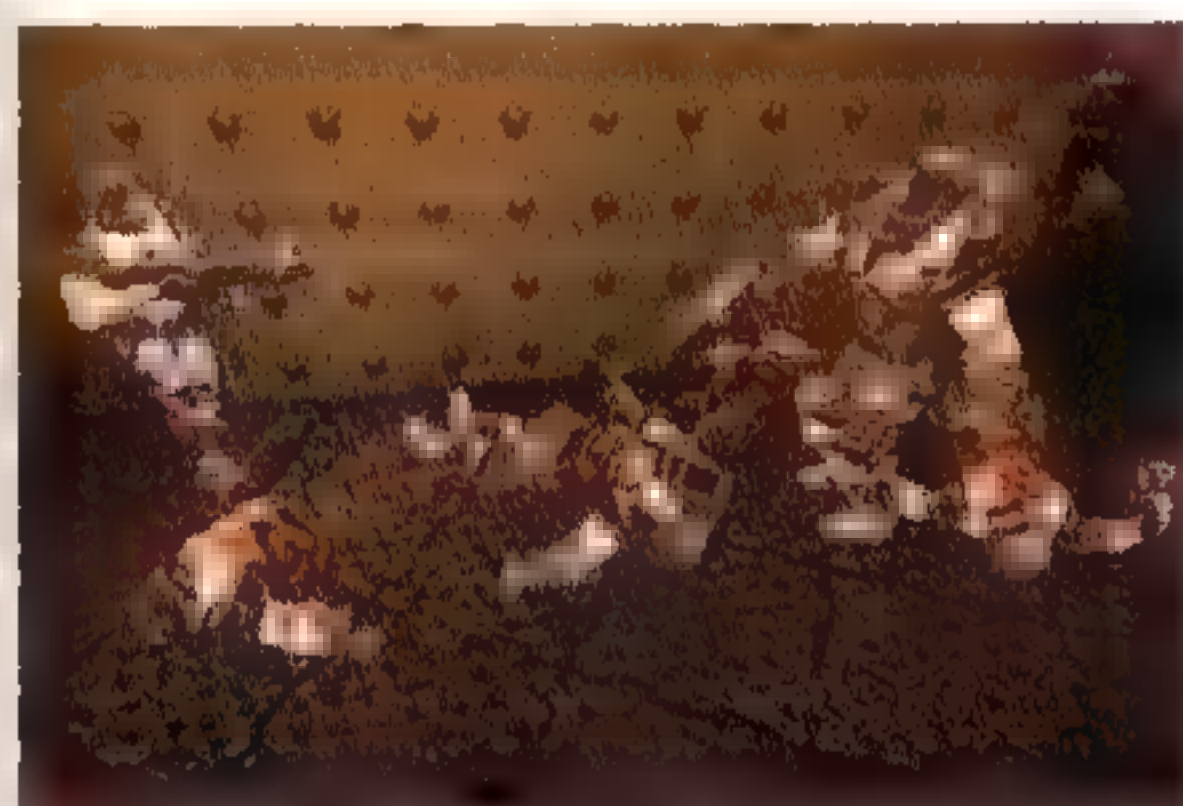


"We're currently planning two games," says a spokesman for Auran. "One strategy and one adventure RPG. People from Auran have been playing with Hârn for the last ten years and we've always been fascinated by the amount of detail in there." The first title is scheduled for release late 1998.

being a relative term, obviously. Hârn is a multi-format RPG, a fully documented island that is compatible with any fantasy role-playing system available. Auran, meanwhile, come from Australia, a fully documented island that is incompatible with any fantasy known to man.

GT Interactive go re-release mental

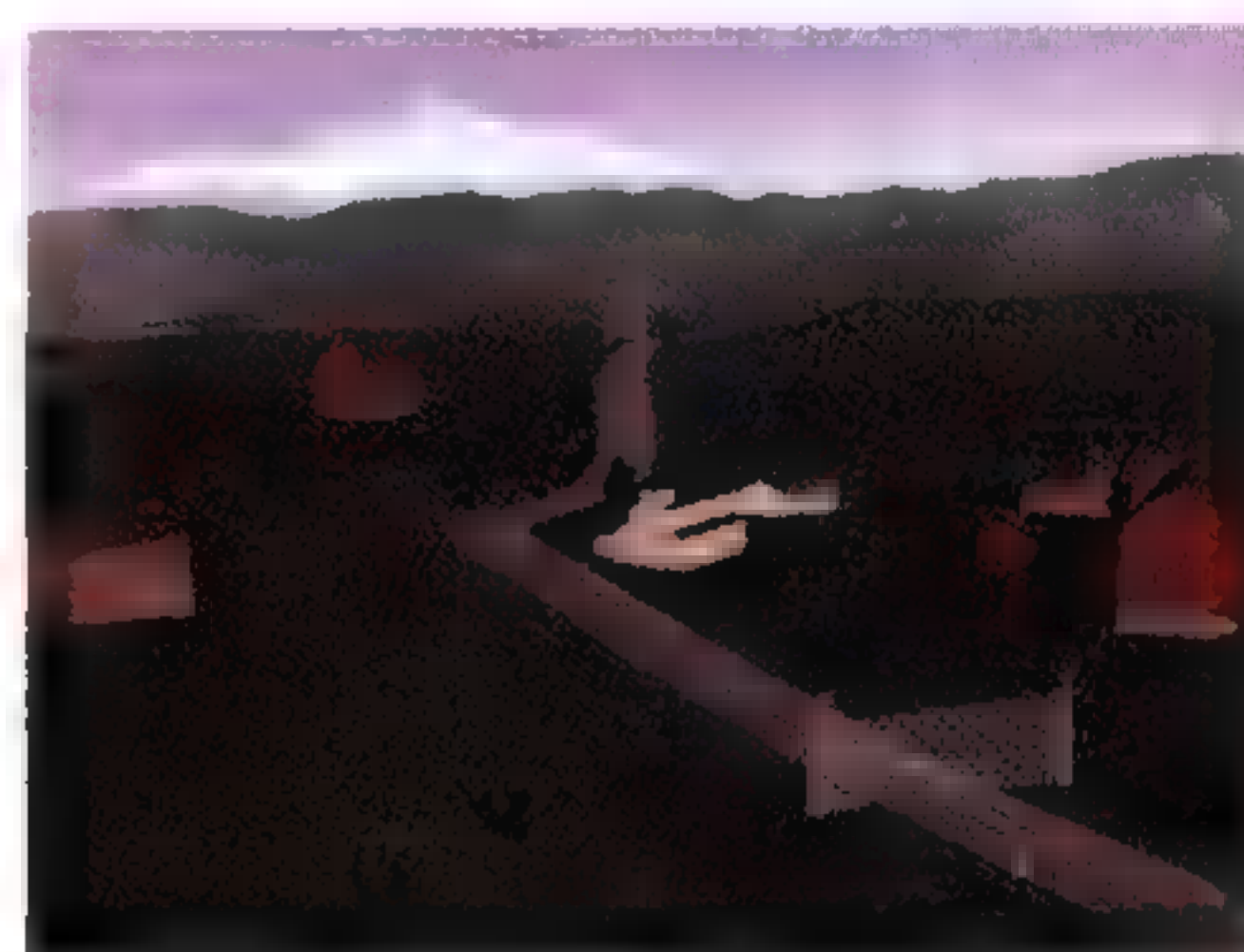
Quake's available on budget! Yes, Quake! What are you doing reading this? You should be out buying it. Still, you've started now, so you may as well finish the paragraph. As well as the aforementioned must-have shoot-crazy classic (sorry about that lapse into Sun-speak), there are top games a-bungo in the latest wave of GT budget titles, as they go into a BBC-like repeat frenzy. Among the titles is the Quake-in-tights corker, Hexen, along with the ever-so-aptly named final version of Doom, Final Doom. For driving fans there will be the Carmageddon



fore-runner, Death Rally. Artist William Latham's Organic Art toy will allow you to make fantasy-novel cover type artwork on your own desktop for less than the price of a fantasy novel (hardback, anyway), and the whole bundle's rounded off with an adorable squeak by the self-styled artificial-life-form thing, Creatures.

Invalid Barrage

Games without publishers are like the Kangol in the window. The Kangol sold out long before the Fila ever did.

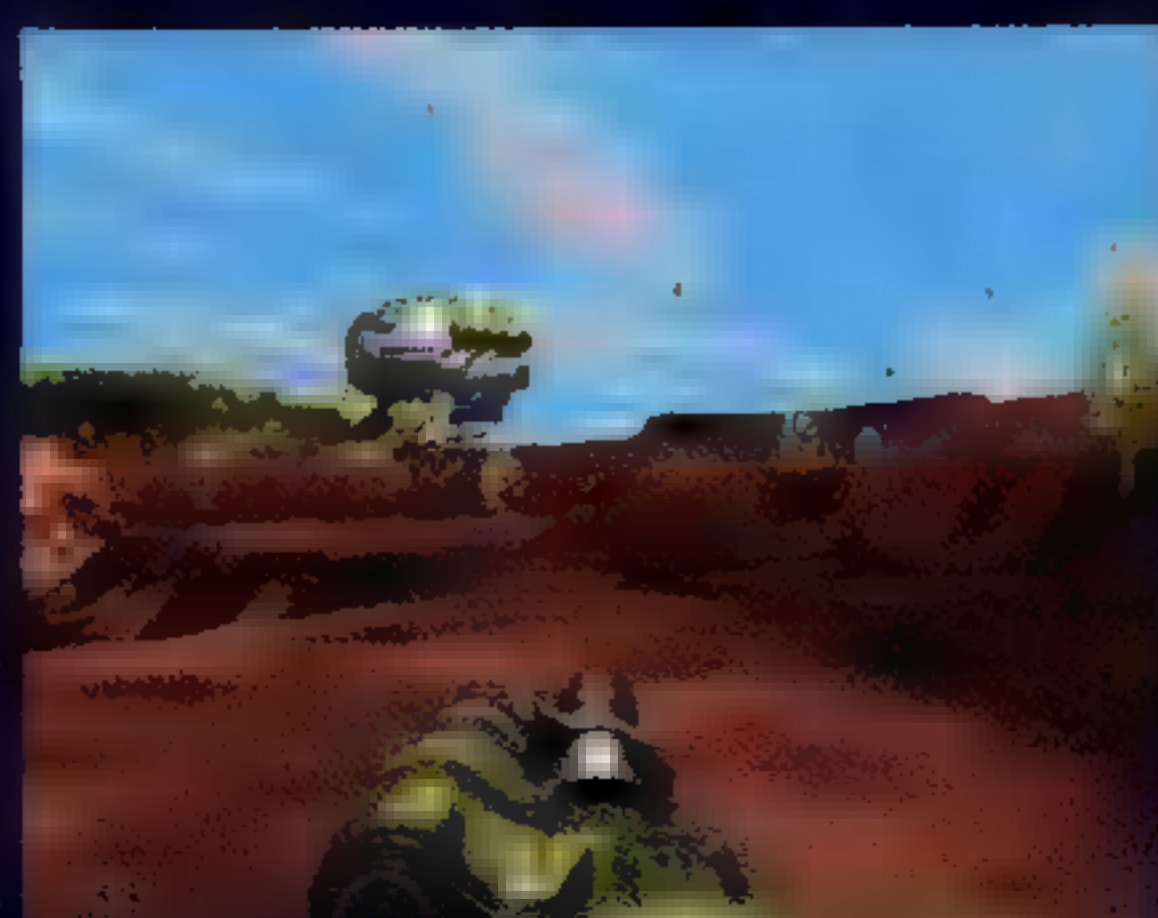


Barrage is such a game, generating a modicum of interest since its preview at E³, where everybody wondered at the lovely sight of it in the 3Dfx booth. You're placed at the wheel of some futuristic hovering vehicle equipped with guns and stuff, and then become concerned that Barrage has been developed by the team responsible for the suspect Cyberia's I and II. Nonetheless, it's a shoot 'em up-by-numbers affair – shoot, collect, open up next level – which includes both surface-based and underwater delights, plus numerous options to add or subtract enemies, objects or alter the weather. Currently requiring a 3Dfx card to run, plans are afoot for Open GL versions as well as an arcade version. A release is pencilled in for early next year. We'll keep you informed as to how it comes on.

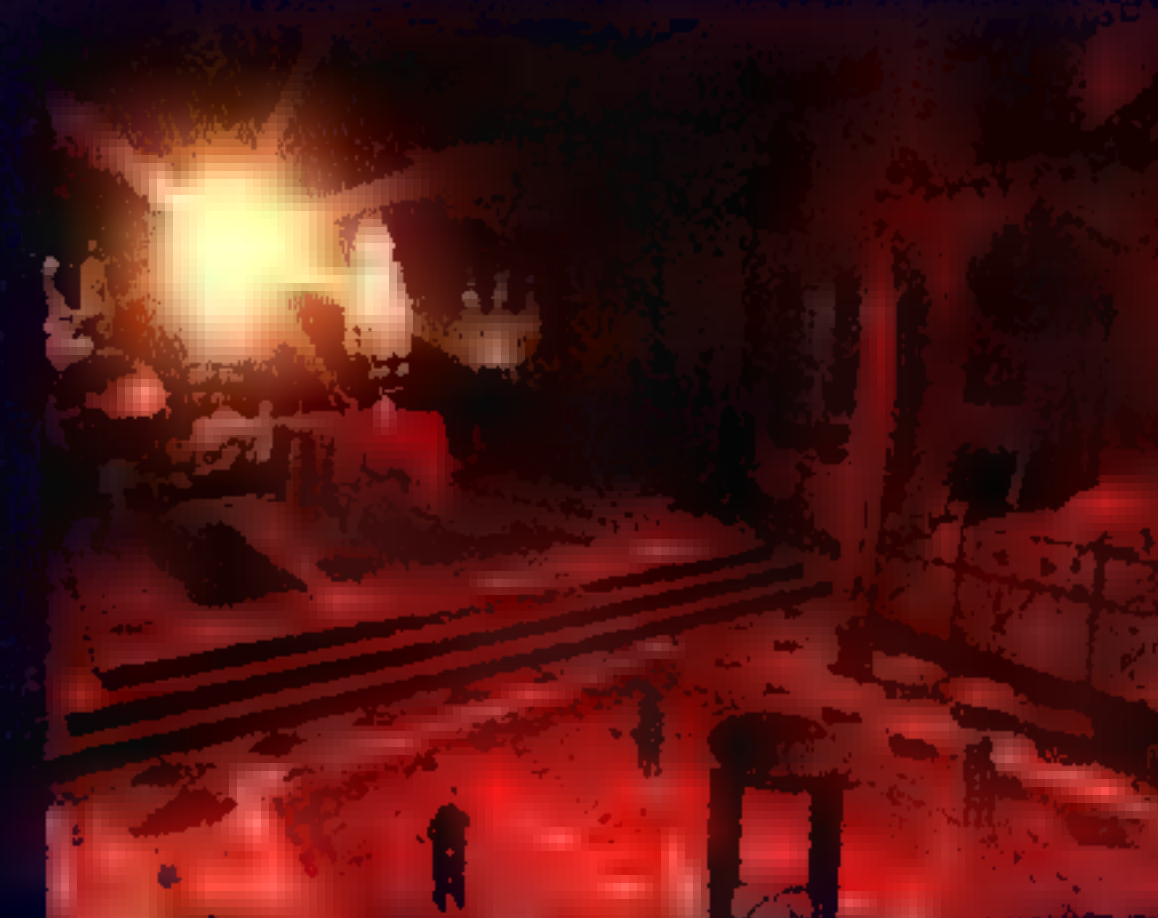
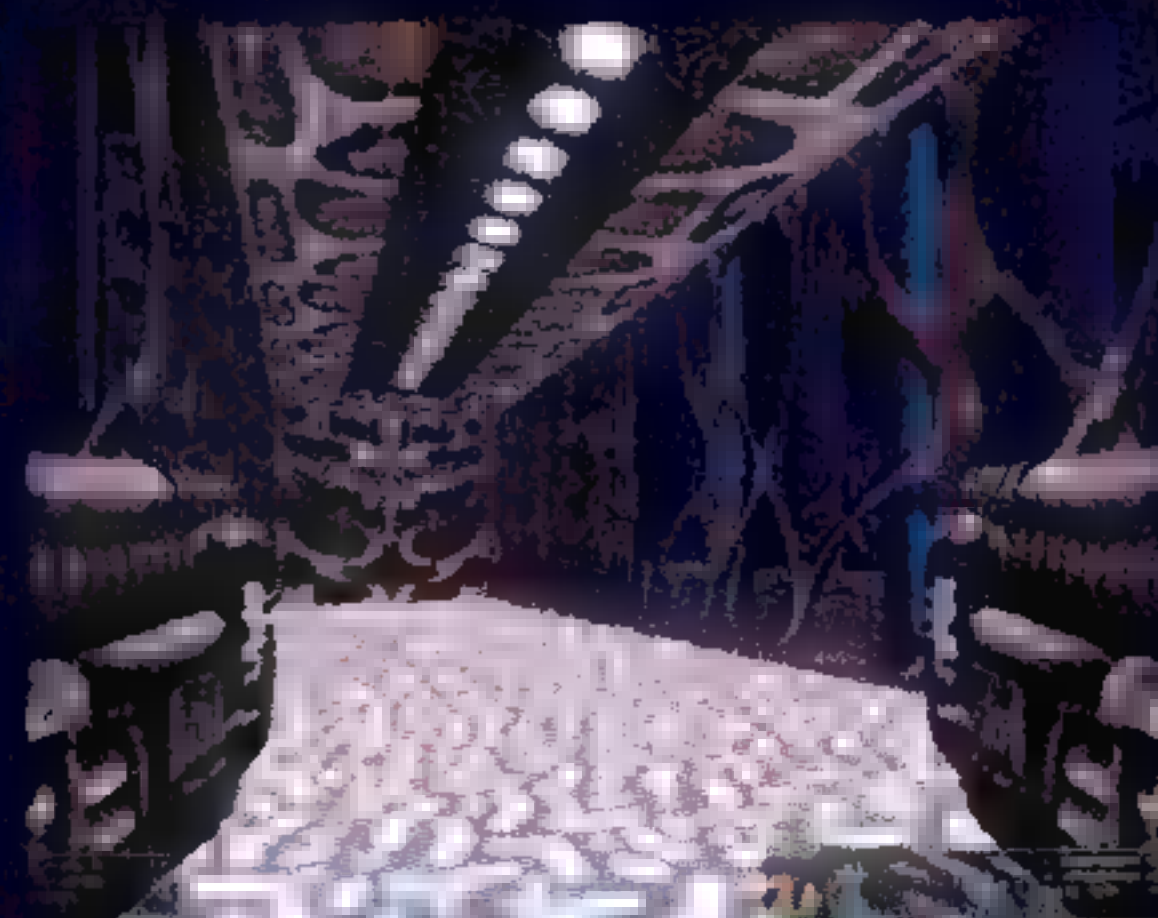
(Top) A shark yesterday. (Above left top) Barrage is nothing like Cyberia – it's not that bad at all. (Above middle) Transcendental meditation beneath Super Furry skies. (Bottom) That was easy to find, wasn't it?

Vision On

The wild world of gaming keeps on expanding, and barely a day goes by without some Johnny Foreigner type leaping on the game development handwagon, the latest alien invader being Auric Vision from Moscow. They're about to launch four new titles, which we'll quickly pick through now. First up is Hippo Stories, a scrolling 2D platform game that's highly reminiscent of Rayman (except with a hippo in it, obviously). Next comes the awkwardly titled Madspace, a not-very-pretty 3D action game with strong overtones of Descent and System Shock. More interesting



ZAR kicks in a voxel. (Middle) Madspace, it leaves a lot to be desired. But we at least like to know it existed. One of the still from



is ZAR, which on paper looks like yet another Quake-alike – except the engine eschews polygons in favour of something akin to Novalogic's 'Voxelspace' system. Finally, we raise a quizzical eyebrow in the direction of Gag, which looks like a cross between Myst

and Under a Killing Moon, except it contains a range of amusing minigames – including a punny version of Tetris and a game where you have to stab houseflies with a fork. We'll move heaven and earth to get them on a coverdisk soon. Promise.

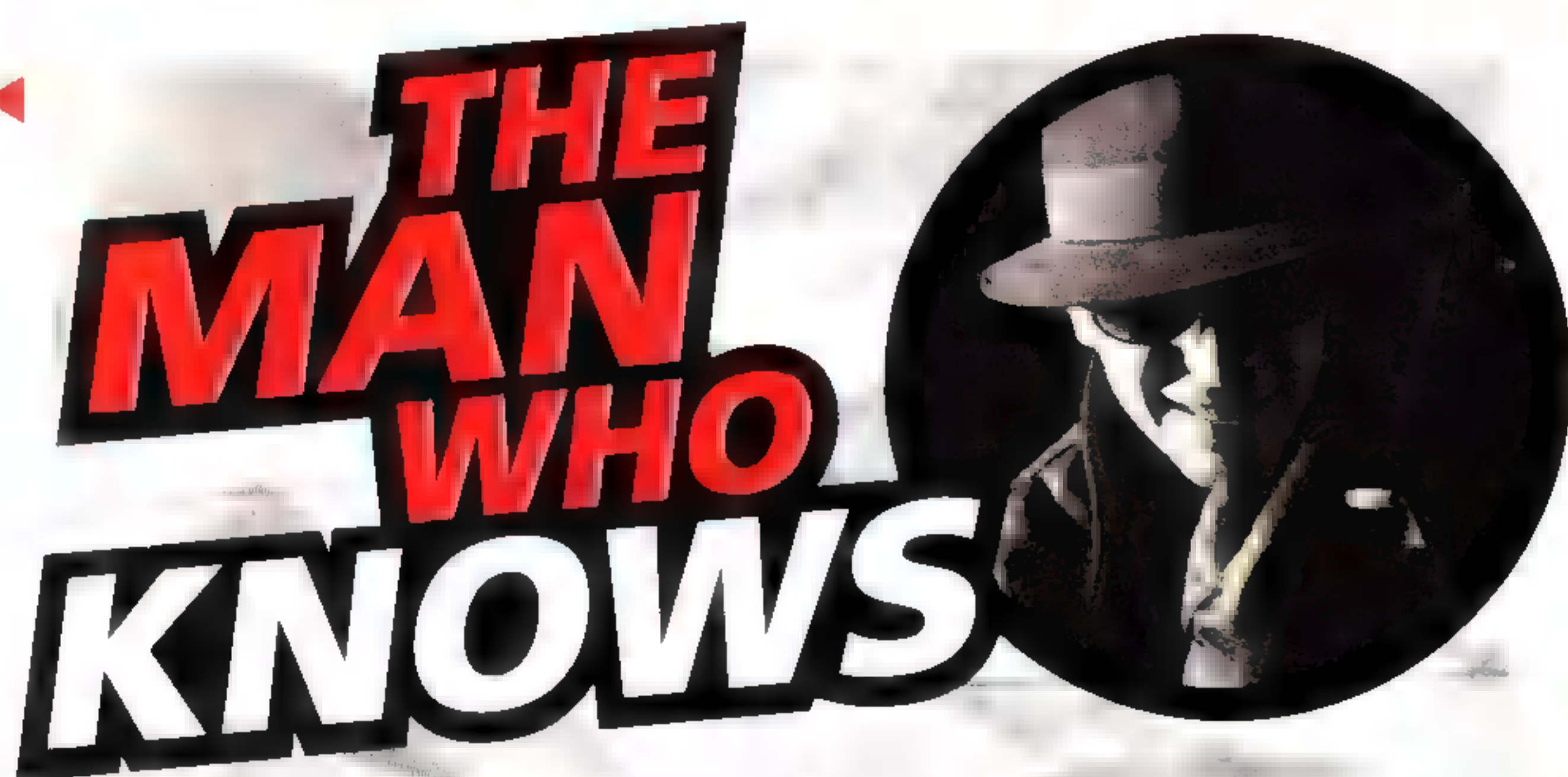
Anything you can sue, I can sue better...

As if GT Interactive weren't busy enough (see MicroProse story on page 17), the industry's second largest software house have plunged headfirst into counter-litigation.

Ex-development team Scavenger, previously best known for the never-released *Into The Shadows* and the bizarre racing title *Scorcher*, recently decided to go one better than missing deadlines and failing to deliver promised titles, by issuing a \$100 million-plus breach of

contract lawsuit against GTI. GTI have issued a counter suit for much the same reasons; they mostly want to retain copyright on the many titles Scavenger were developing for them, though it's rumoured that rights to *Into The Shadows* have been kept by the project's author.

DATA PRO



Gossip, hearsay, and indeed heresy is my business, with no nugget of information overlooked in the endless quest for industry facts. Not to mention the occasional scurrilous rumour, half-truth or blatant lie...

Regular readers of this esteemed column – and I am led to believe you are legion – will by now be only too aware of the exploits of one Rhona Mitra, she of the ever-expanding breasts. Hired to portray the ubiquitous star of *Tomb Raider*, Rhona is Lara is Rhona – is no more, it would seem, having been unceremoniously dumped by her paymasters Eidos. Details as to the sketchy, although in a secret meeting with one of my international team of snouts, the words 'whining' and 'bitch' were mentioned. Whither for the young starlet, her otherwise moribund career having been given a major boost by Eidos, to the extent that she recently reached the status of *FHM* cover model? Without the Lara Croft endorsement, the words 'borrowed time' spring to mind, although with her undoubted assets she could have a very big future in the specialist video market. *Tomb Raider*, anyone?

Interplay and Shiny have had a fight. The former had previously published the latter's *MDK*, a game which sold like cold cakes despite over a year's worth of hype. Shiny are currently working on *Fly By Wire*, said to be a flight sim with a difference (so perhaps it won't be incredibly tedious). Nevertheless, Interplay have declared that they themselves are not interested, and Shiny have been hawking the project to other potential publishers, including Playmates, with whom they have worked in the past.

Accolade have gone and got themselves some sounds. Their forthcoming *Test Drive 4* will feature the tracks 'Out There Somewhere Part 2' by Orbital, as well as 'Here I Come' and 'Keep The Beat' by The Younger, Younger 28's, which is as loud a name for a band as I've ever come across. Orbital you should already know about: the Mitchell brother doppelgangers have been knocking out bleeps for over a decade and contributed to the *WipeOut* soundtrack, as well as recording an ill-conceived cover version of *The Saint* theme tune for the recent Hollywood debacle. As for the other band (I'm not repeating their name again), leader Jimmy Dickinson has confessed to being a member of the group Little Angels. If memory serves correct, they hailed from the cultural abyss of Scarborough, their piss-poor soft metal/cock-rock abomination earning them support slots with the likes of Guns N' Roses, Van Halen and Aerosmith. In response to the signings, Accolade's Chris Downend enthused: "These two bands fit the style of gameplay in *Test Drive 4*, both in attitude and energy. We're excited about this addition." Good.

Rick Dyer, the creator of *Dragon's Lair* (generally regarded as the first animated video game), has spoken out against violence in the industry. He's not talking about the occasional trade show skirmish, but of the wanton butchery inherent in many of today's games. Says Rick: "Blood for blood's sake is not what we should be offering electronic game enthusiasts. I believe we have reached a point of diminishing returns with these types of games and this year's game introductions will offer more balance for families to consider." Completely coincidentally, Dyer has a family-oriented game on the horizon, *Shadow*, which has no blood in it whatsoever.

There's been mither at 3D action specialists Apogee, with top cheese Scott Miller dising former employees who, he claims, have been exaggerating their achievements in order to make themselves look big. He cited "an employee at Rebel Boat Rocker who says on their Web page that he made 'dozens' of levels for *Duke* and *Shadow Warrior*, when in fact he made eight in total, and not all of them finished when he departed". Miller raged: "On that same page is another RBR employee taking credit for creating all of the weapons in *Duke Nukem 3D*, when that's far, far from the truth. It just doesn't make any sense, and it's a crime against the real contributors." And we all know that crime doesn't pay. Or does it?

Right, that's your lot. I'm off to indulge in a hedonistic orgy of narcotic excess and sexual experimentation. Don't wait up...

What we rally, rally want (reprise)



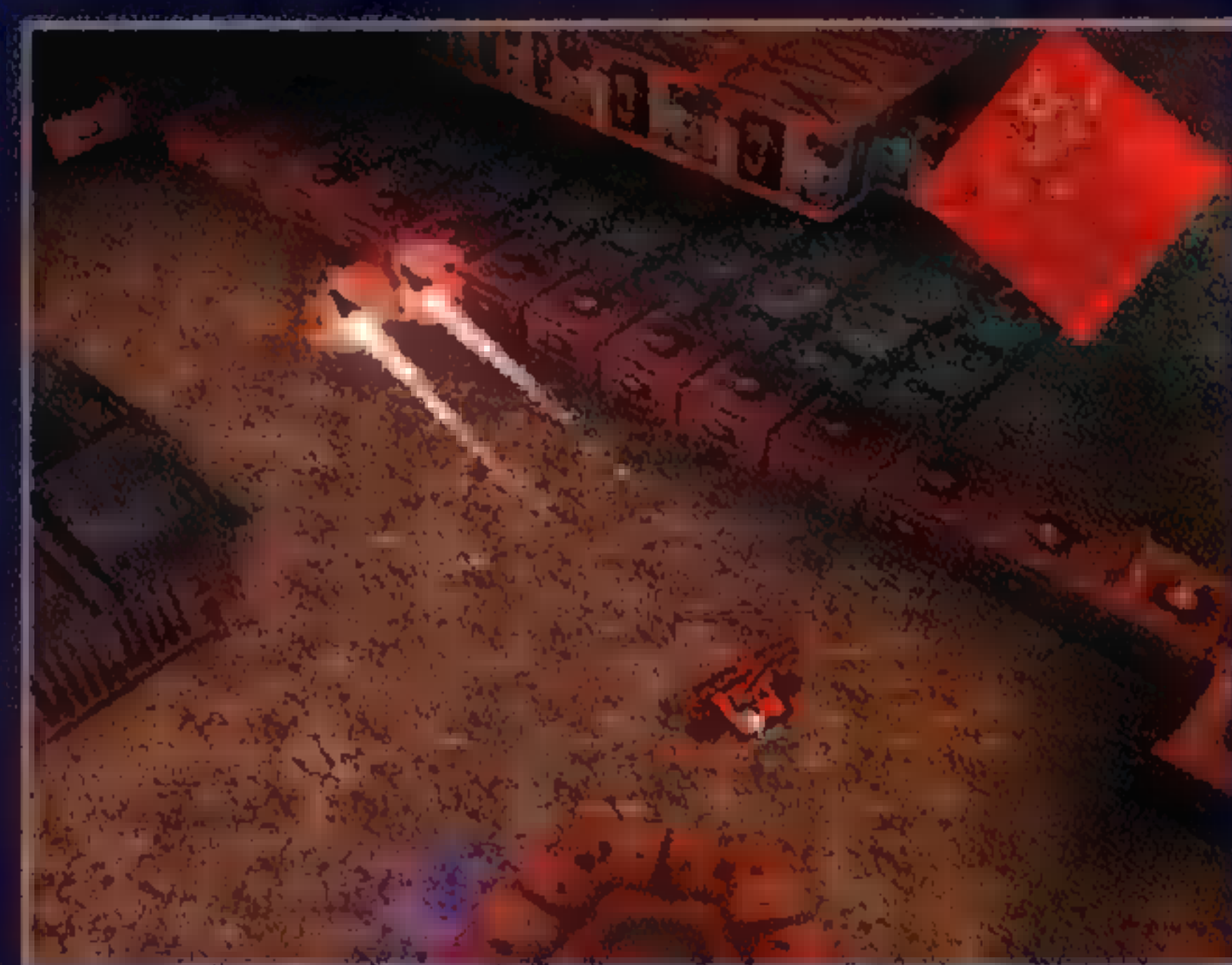
The man in action: Colin McRae blasts around the Aussie rally.

The whole world's going driving game crazy at the moment, and no one more so than those chaps at Codemasters. Not content with working their hairy little fingers to the bone with the upcoming *Touring Car Championship*, they're also in the very early stages of *Colin McRae World Rally*. As it's been endorsed by the man who makes Eric 'On the Roof' Carlsson look like Noddy in his little yellow car, you can guarantee that the action will

be fast and scary, and will probably involve more than a little upside-down-ness. It looks like you'll have to make do with just imagining what it's like to go tearing yet again down tiny country lanes in a super-charged scary bastard car, though, because we don't even have any screenshots yet. **Z**

State of Reflux

Polish-based developers Metropolis have announced details of their 3D real-time strategy game, which goes by the name of *Reflux*. Not dissimilar to *Total Annihilation*, the game will feature smooth 3D textured polygons instead of the more traditional C&C-like sprites. So far it's looking like it could be more action-based than many of its peers – all the units will be fully customisable and players will be able to choose from a variety of components, and produce a number



of unique units into the bargain. Choosing different sets of bodies, legs and weapons combinations will allow up to 512 different unit variations. Lots of sponge-worthy graphical effects are promised, as well as a demo-recorder for showing off your gaming skills over the Net. Details of a UK publisher are sketchy at the moment, but Metropolis are aiming for a Christmas release in the US. **Z**

You read it here first

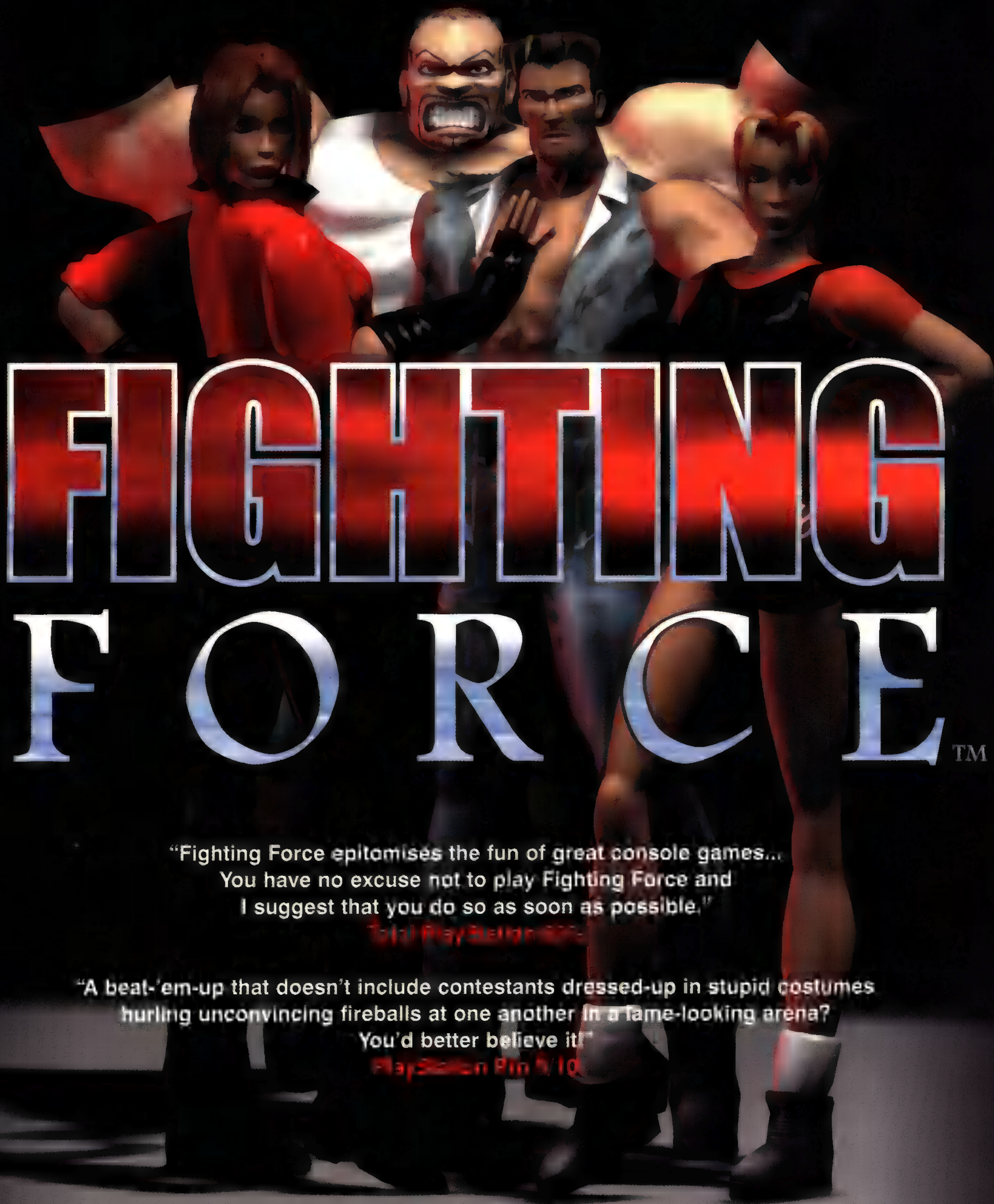
A few last minute mumblings as we go to press... Lead *MDK* programmer Nick Bruty has upped and buggered off from Shiny to set up his own software group. Apparently he's calling his new company Giant Moon, which sounds to us like the sort of thing you see when Gulliver drops his trousers. Giant Moon will be funded by Interplay, and their first game is said to be of the '3D action' variety.

Virgin have finally released all the names of the original *Blade Runner* actors employed by Westwood to work on the game. It has been known for some time that a number of the original cast had agreed to work on voice-overs and video segments, but Westwood have been playing their cards close to their chest. They are: Sean Young (Rachael), Brion James (Leon), James Hong (Dr Chew), Joe Turkel (Eldon Tyrell) and

William Sanderson (J.S. Sebastian). Clancey Brown (from *Highlander*) was also used for voice-overs.

Douglas Adams' *Starship Titanic* has slipped into next year. "In order to ensure completion of essential quality evaluation and testing, we have decided to postpone the release," said Rob Stamp, spokesperson for developers Digital Village. A new ETA has been set for January. **Z**

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hurling unconvincing fireballs at one another in a lame-looking arena?
You'd better believe it!"

PlayStation Pin 5/10

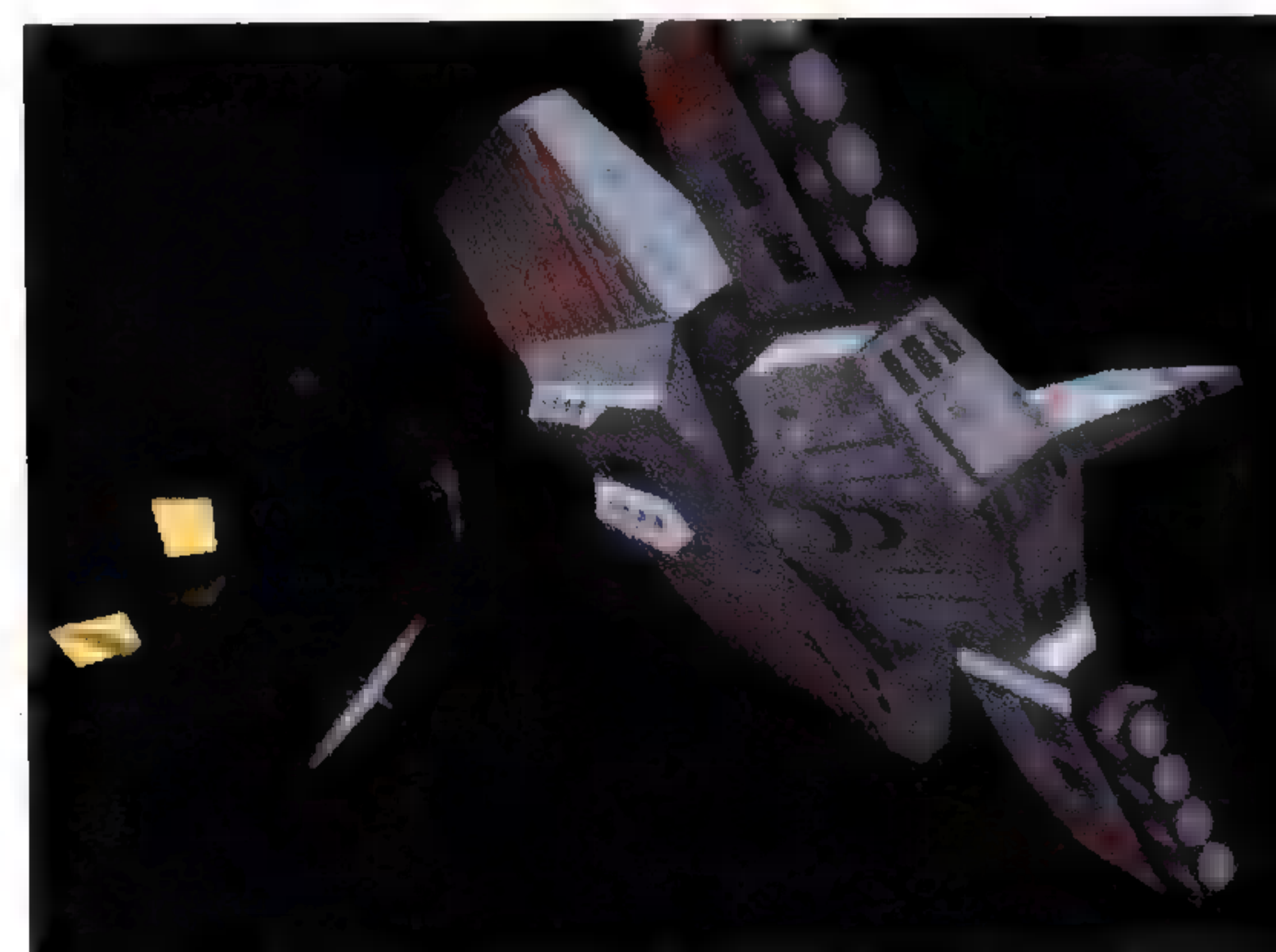
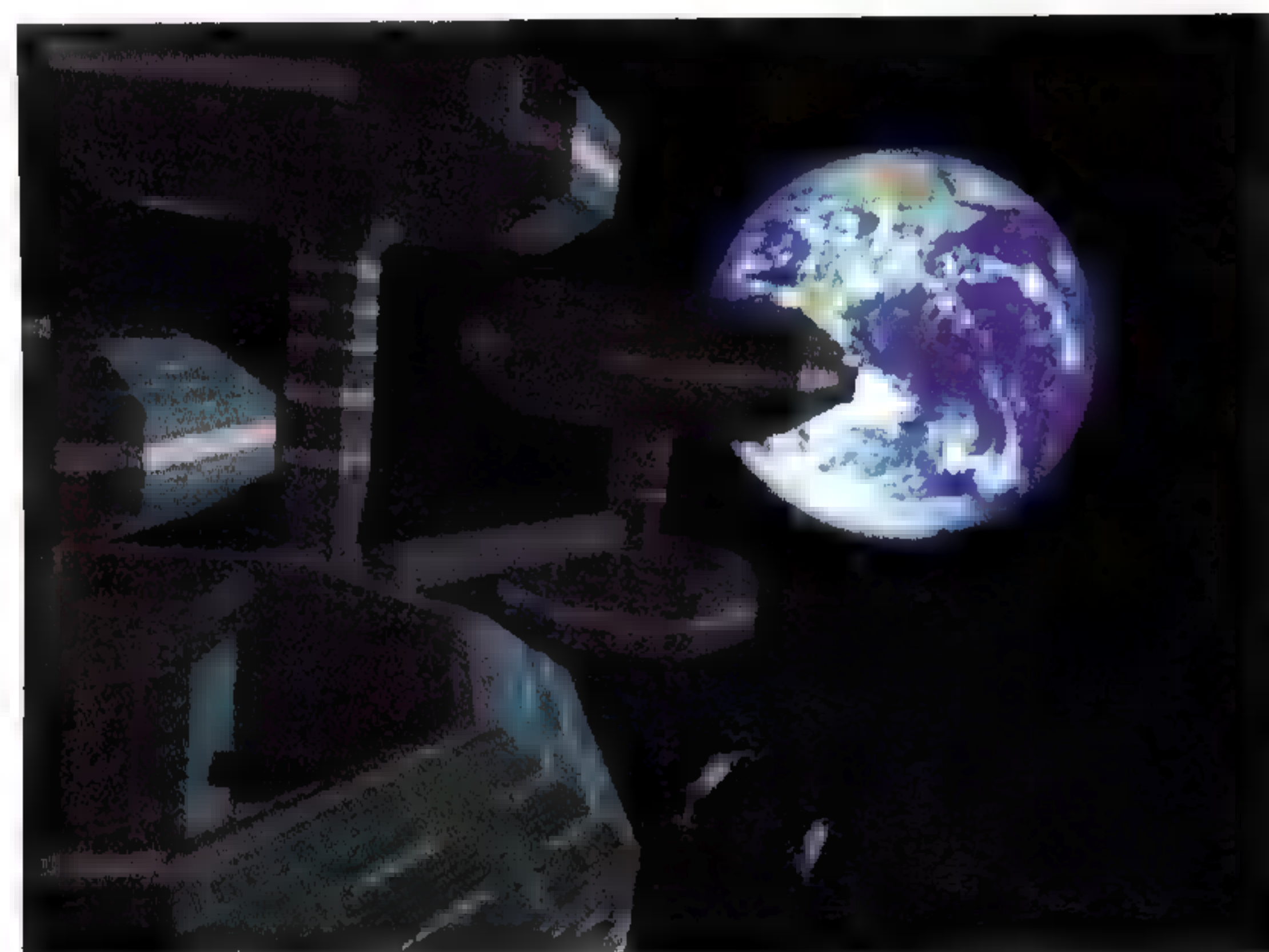


EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

HOT Shots

10th Planet (Bethesda/Virgin)

This is one game that we've known about for absolutely yonkies now (we played an early version at Bethesda over a year ago), but haven't been able to write much about in these pages because solid information is currently very thin on the ground. We have these new shots, though, showing this high speed space shoot 'em up in all its glory. If you didn't already know: Bethesda are working in conjunction with Centropolis (the people behind the god awful *Independence Day* film) on this title, so you can expect to see loads of outrageous technological jargon and gun-ho action for your hard earned spondulicks.

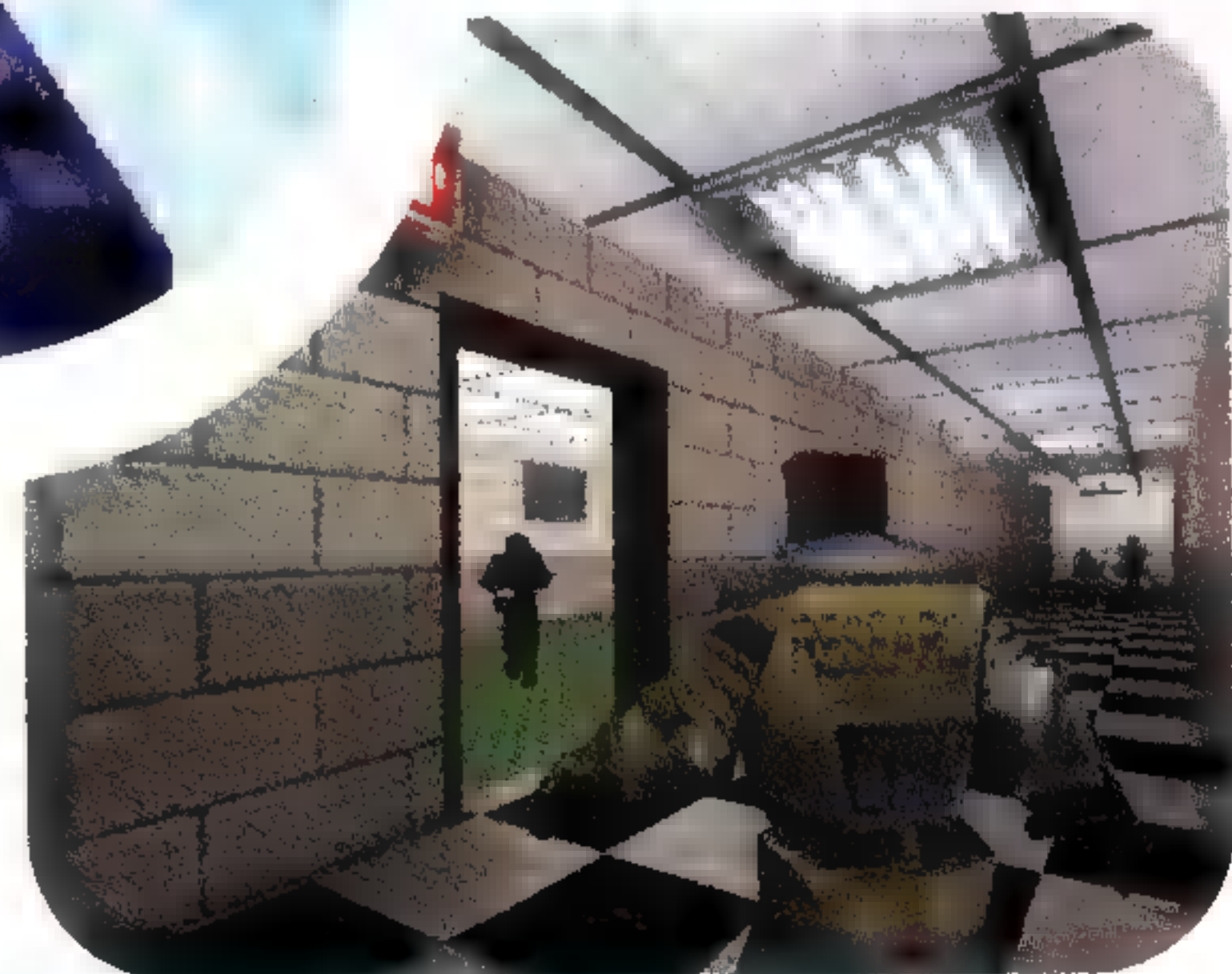
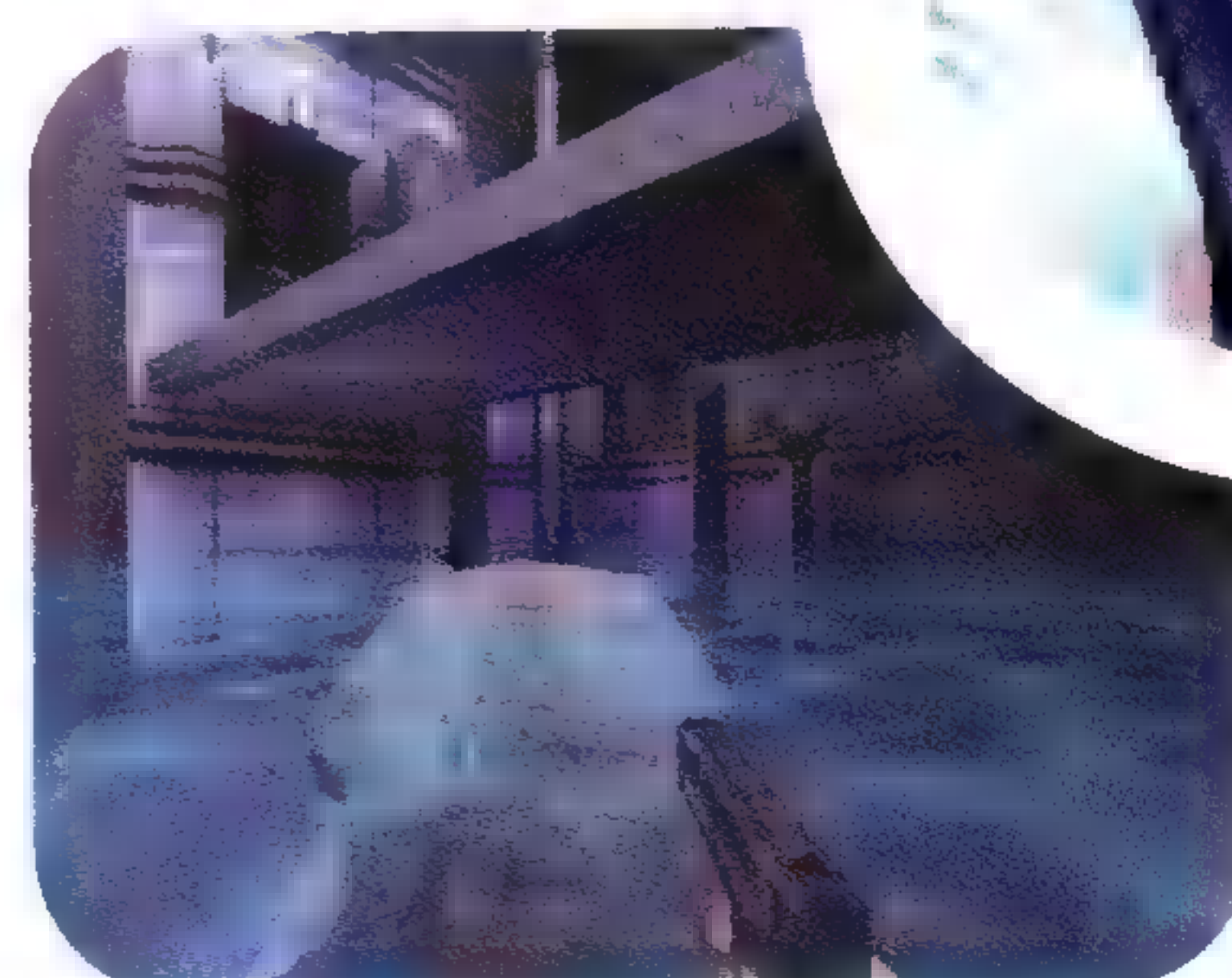
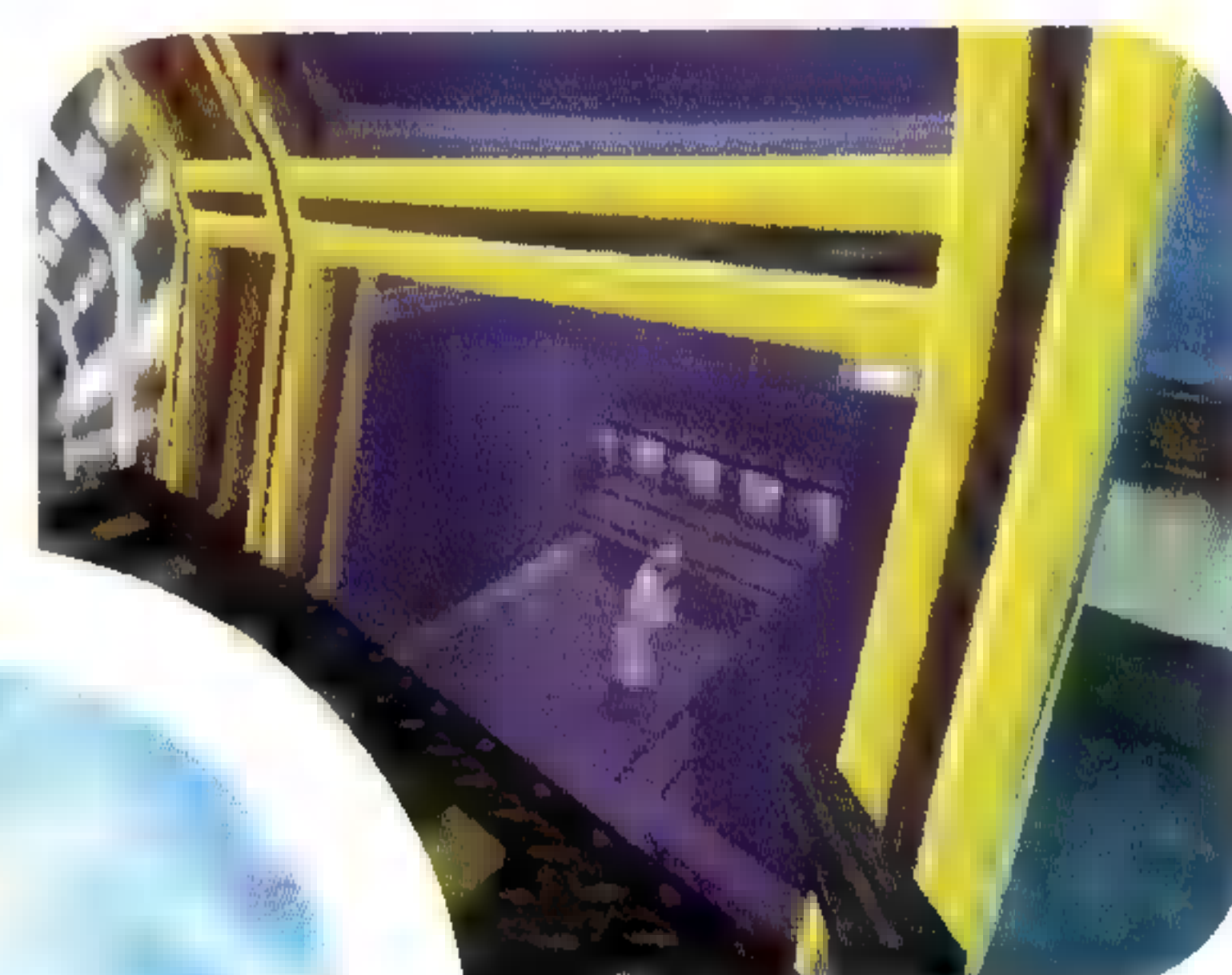


This is Hot Shots. It is not called Eye Candy, or Red Hot XXX pics. No. It is called Hot Shots. It is a place where the shots are hot and the language even hotter. It is our regular update page of some repute. It is, erm, a collection of the latest screenshots from stuff currently in production.

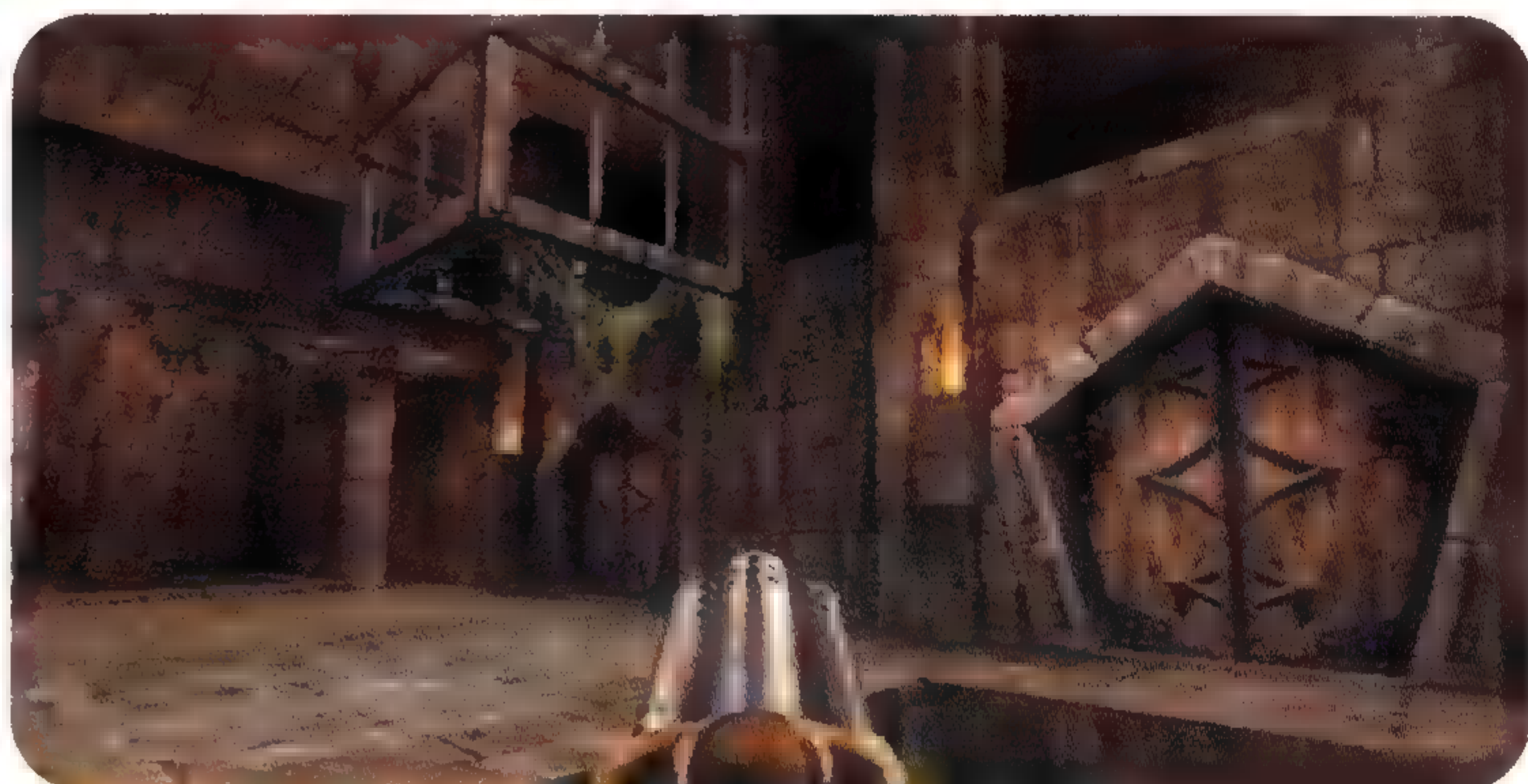
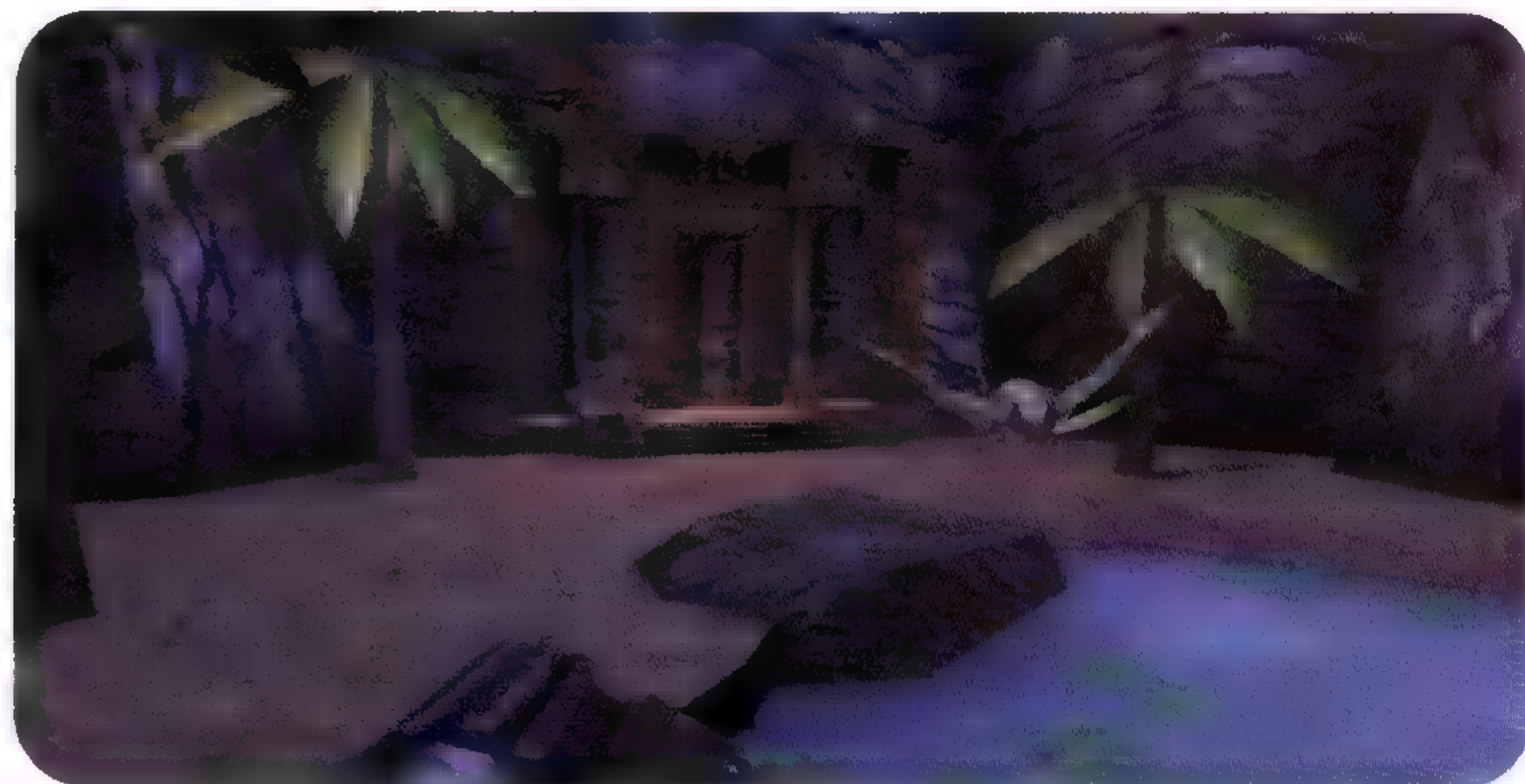
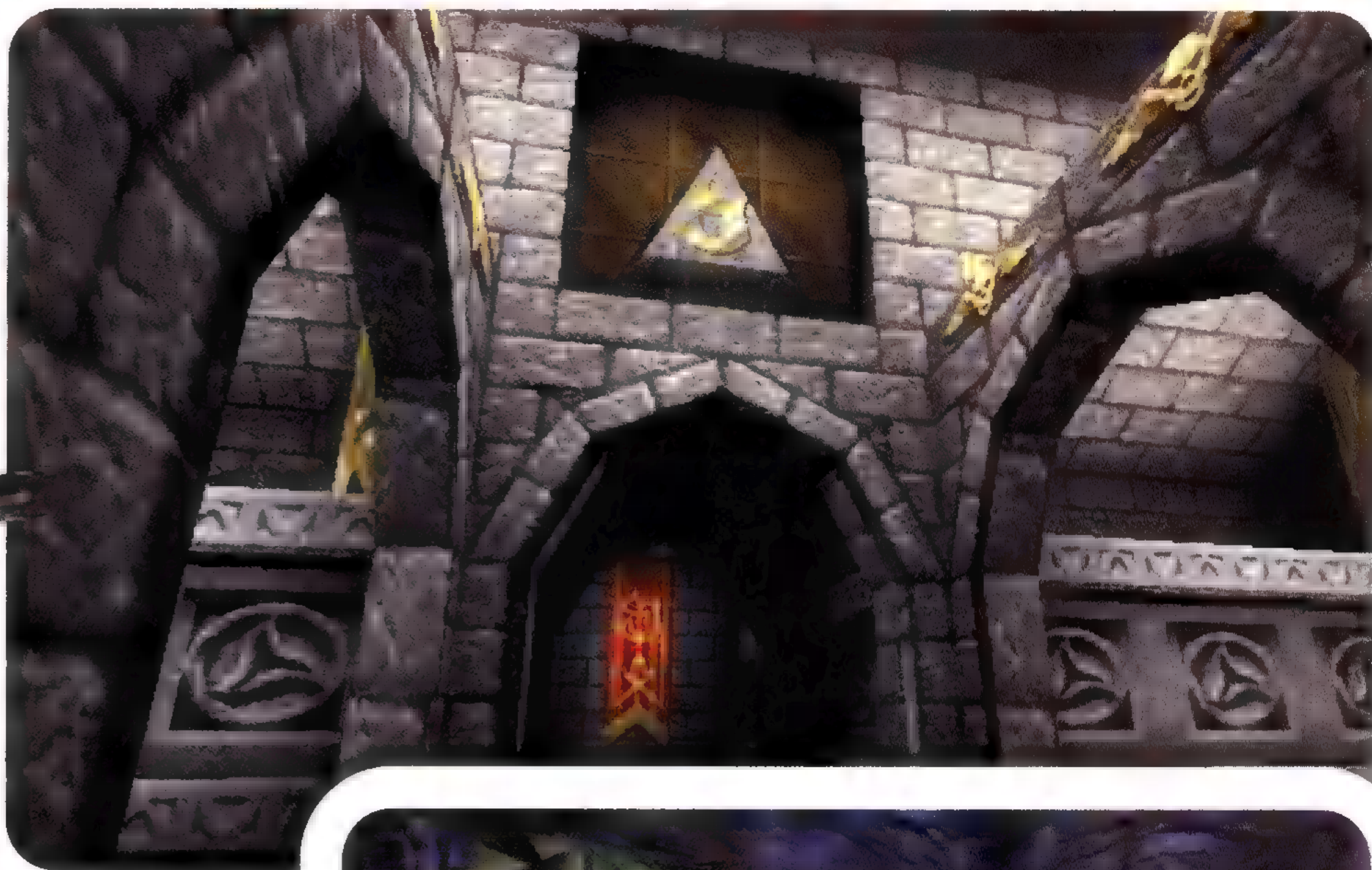


Half Life (Valve/Sierra)

Half Life, the promising first person shoot 'em up from Sierra, has unfortunately slipped back in its schedule into next year. Rumours abound that developers Valve are holding the game back so that they can incorporate *Quake 2* technology into it. *Half Life* was due to use an enhanced version of the *Quake* engine. If this is the case, we should discount these mega sponge shots because the game will obviously change quite a bit over the coming months. Or will it? Who knows? We're speculating at the moment, but rest assured we'll keep you informed as to how things develop.



Unreal (Epic/GT Interactive)



Epic are feeling very confident about their much lauded first-person shooter *Unreal*. Having toured with a new version, and garnered much praise along the way, the game is finally looking complete.

"It's gonna be better than anything else you've ever seen," said marketing monster Mark Raines recently, which immediately forced us to switch off and look for a sensible (ie non-marketing) person to speak to.

We found one. Jay Wilbur, Epic biz guy, recently crossed 'the pond' to give us a personal update on the game. It seems that *Unreal* has come a long way since we ceased the ill-fated developer diary some time ago. Epic have incorporated most of the weapons, monsters, coloured lighting effects, and – more interestingly – 'portals', which allow players to 'jump' seamlessly from one room to another without noticing. In a very similar manner to the portal system seen in 3D Realms' *Procyon*, Wilbur would not be drawn on these 'similarities'.

Overall, *Unreal* does some amazing stuff. Far more than we first imagined. We're waiting now for a final copy of the *Unreal* editor so we can re-create the *Zone* offices and run around shooting each other for fun.



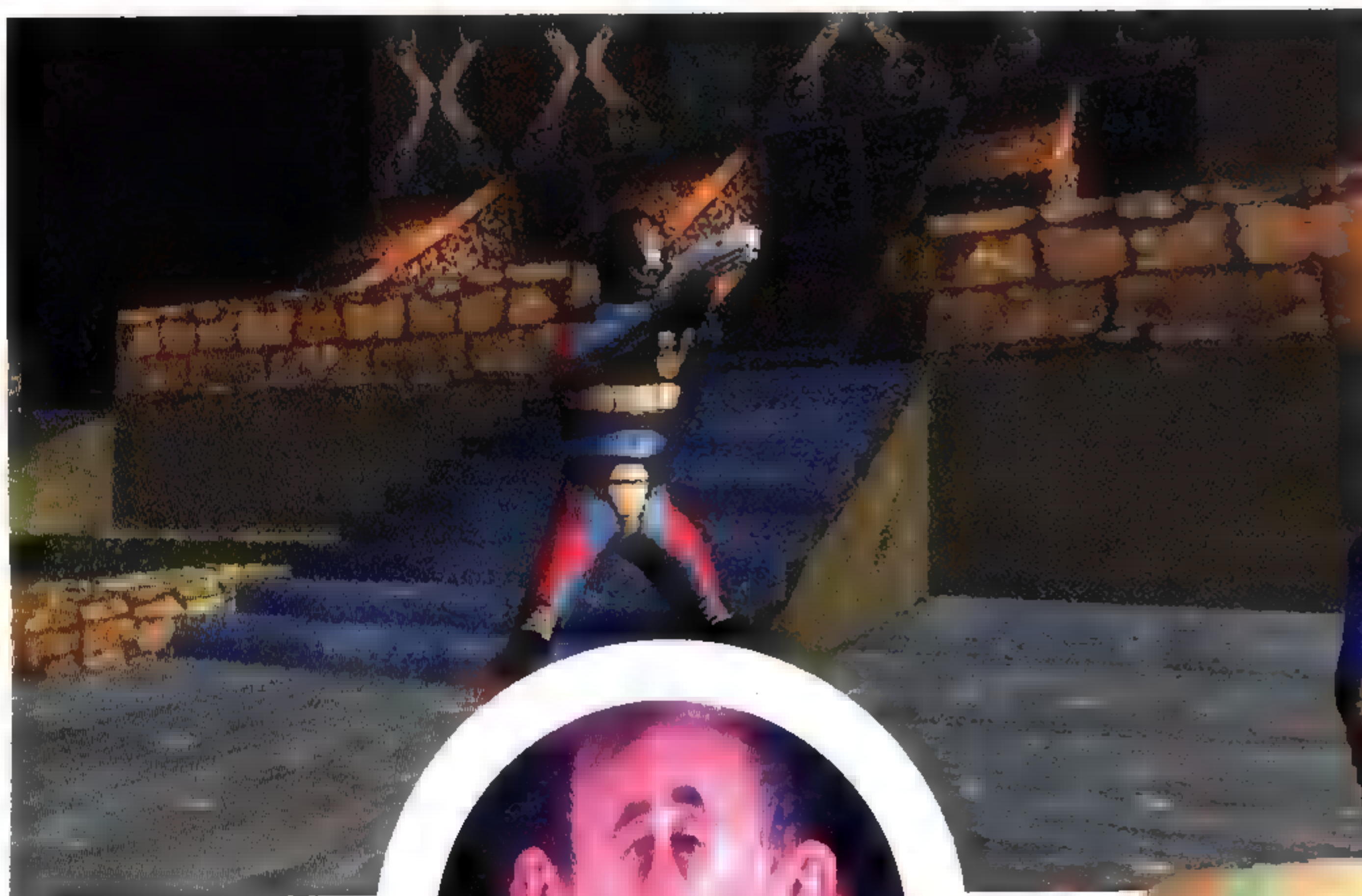
HOT Shots



Earthsiege 3: Future Wars (Sierra)

Yet another Sierra title suffering from that dreaded of all gaming diseases: slippage. This one has been put back to February, but is already beginning to look brilliant. *PC Zone* was recently treated to an early look at this BioDermatologically-oriented action game, and have to say that designer David Selle and his team have really excelled themselves.

Graphically, *Earthsiege 3* is an amazing mix of organic 3D models, coloured lights and huge explosions. Much like the inner workings of Charlie Brooker's mind, in fact.



Omikron (Quantic Dream/Eidos)

Omikron moves as good as it looks. This is a very good thing. We could therefore have something a teensy bit special on our hands. *Omikron* is an adventure game whose features are more akin to beat 'em ups such as *Tekken 2* and *Fighting Force*. Developers Quantic Dream tell us we should be able to move around the parallel universe of *Omikron*, pass through buildings, and even control anti-gravity vehicles. The player will be able to interact with characters, give them a good slapping and even transfer their own soul into another body if they die in combat.

Accelerated versions are currently leading the way, but apparently Quantic Dream are putting a lot of effort into the software-accelerated version as well, and we have been assured it will look just as good.



HEXEN II



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**PC
ZONE**

our price

CHART

Predictions

Welcome to PC Zone's version of *The Chart Show*, sponsored by Our Price. Each month it'll feature the titles we think will be flying off the shelves in the coming weeks, and it will also play host to exclusive news and competitions.



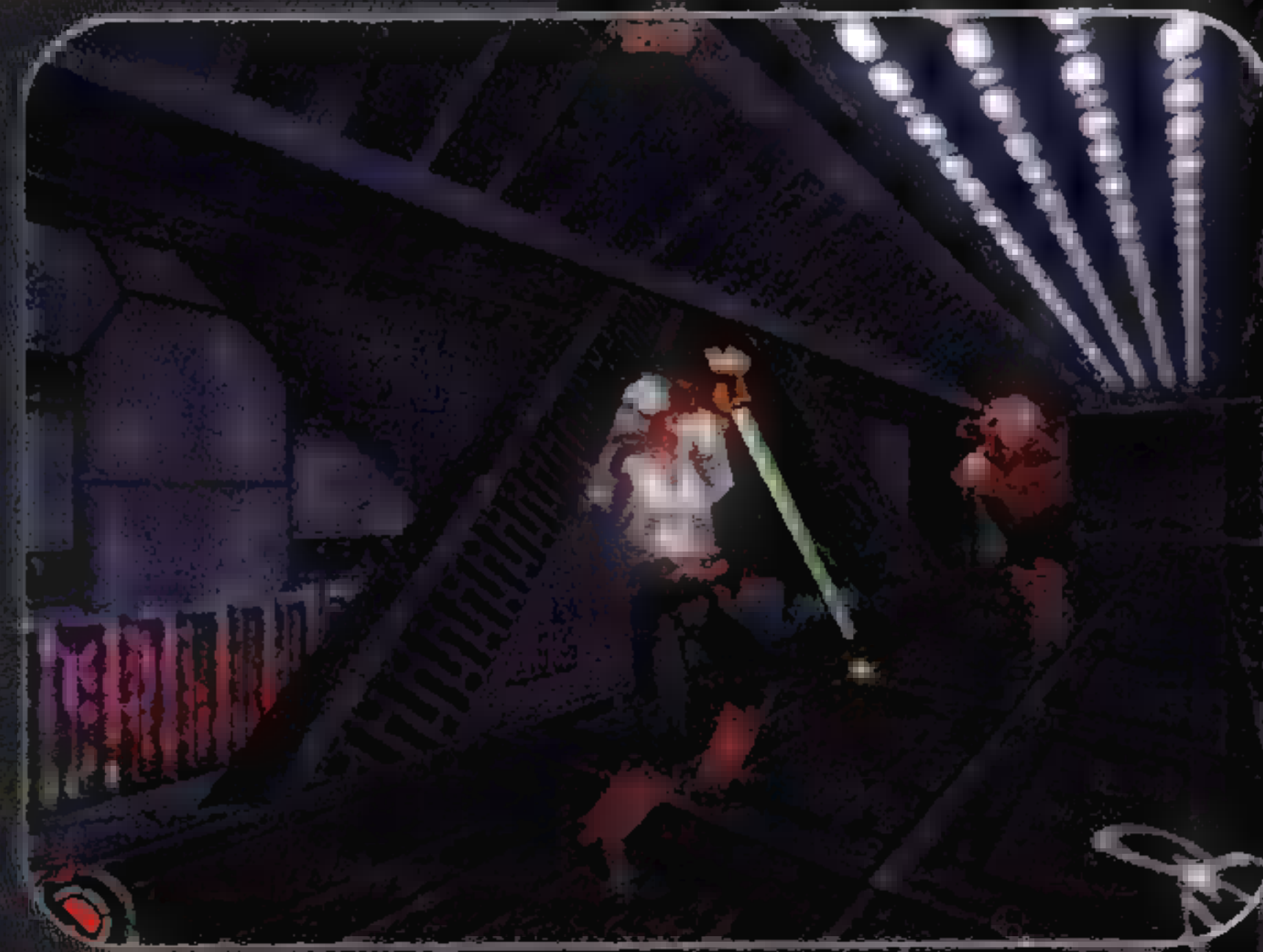
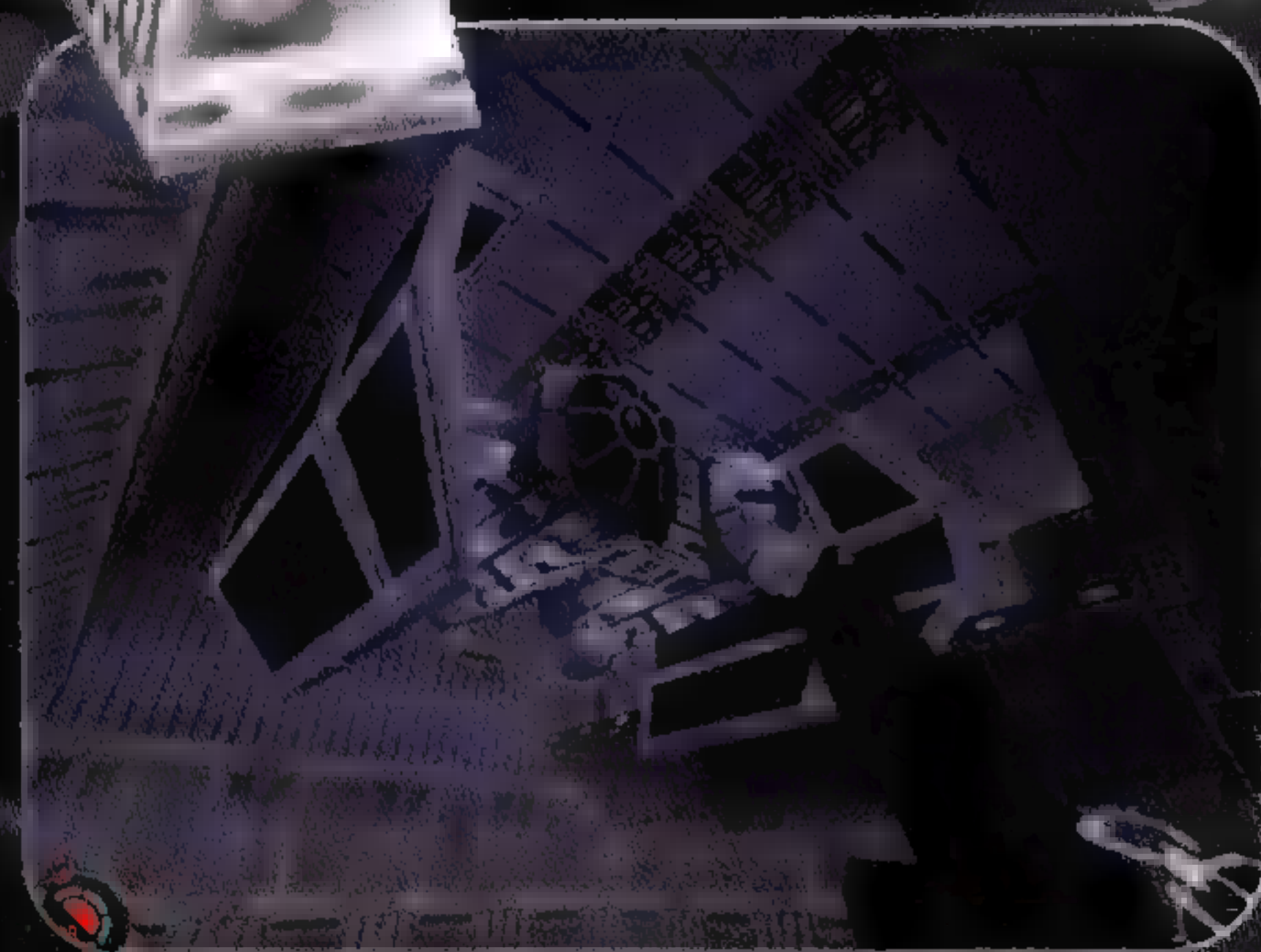
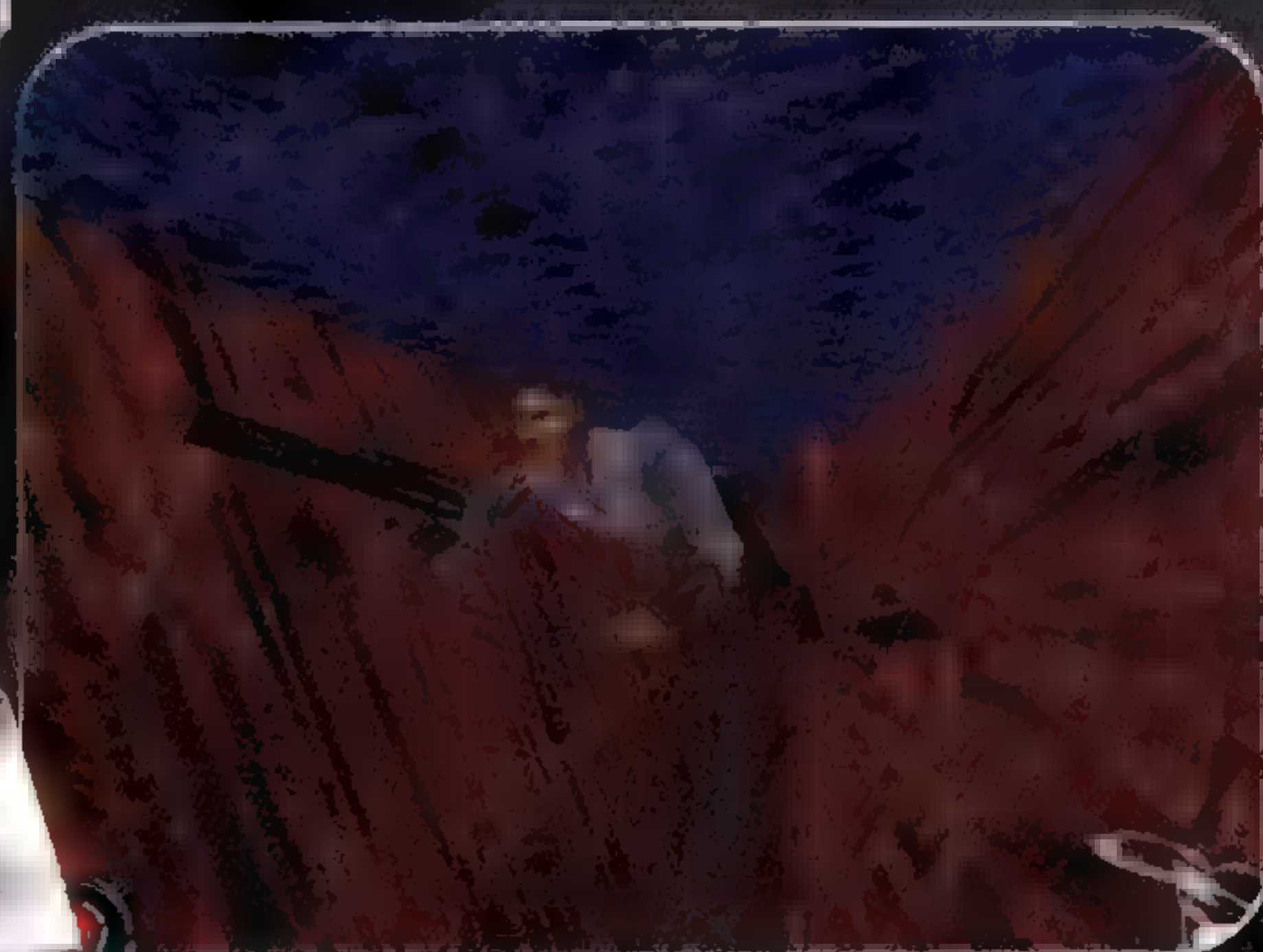
TAR WARS IS TOPICAL AGAIN THIS MONTH WITH JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES II storming to the top of the chart. The great atmosphere, graphics, special effects and soundtracks make you think you've just walked from the film set! The gameplay is thrilling, with huge levels to conquer, and you'll be blown away by the stunning 3D graphics - what more could you want from a game?

To take part in this month's Our Price Top 10 prize giveaway, just put pen to paper, answer the question below and send it in to: PC Zone Our Price Competition (57), Dennis Publishing Ltd, 19 Bolsover St, London W1P 7HJ.

Our Price Question:

WHO WILL PLAY OBI WAN IN THE NEW STAR WARS FILMS?

Rules and restrictions: All entries must be received by Monday 17 November 1997. No correspondence will be entered into. The editor's decision is final and the winners will be notified by post. All other usual restrictions apply.



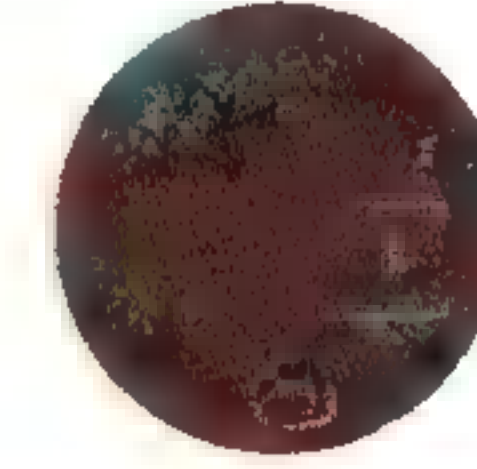
1

**JEDI KNIGHT:
DARK FORCES II**
(LucasArts/VIE)
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2

DARK REIGN
(Activision)
£29.99



3

**CHAMPIONSHIP
MANAGER 2 97/98**
(Eidos Interactive)
£24.99



4

**C&C: THE
AFTERMATH**
(Virgin Interactive)
£14.99



5

LANDS OF LORE 2
(Westwood/Virgin)
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6

QUAKE
(GT Interactive)
£11.99



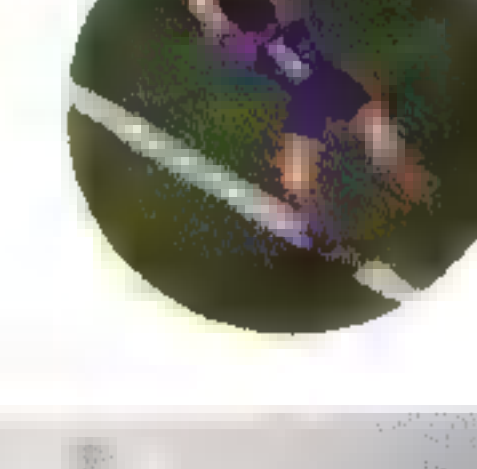
7

HEXEN II
(Activision)
£29.99



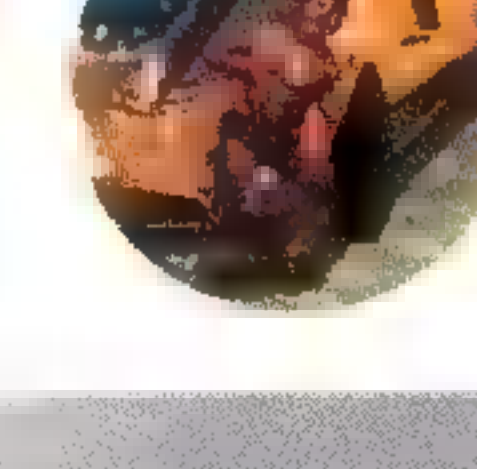
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ACTUA SOCCER
(Gremlin Interactive)
£7.99



9

CARMAGEDDON
(SCI)
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10

WORMS UNITED
(Ocean)
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DISCLAIMER: The Top 10 printed is correct at the time of going to press but positions, titles and prices may vary throughout the month.

Start

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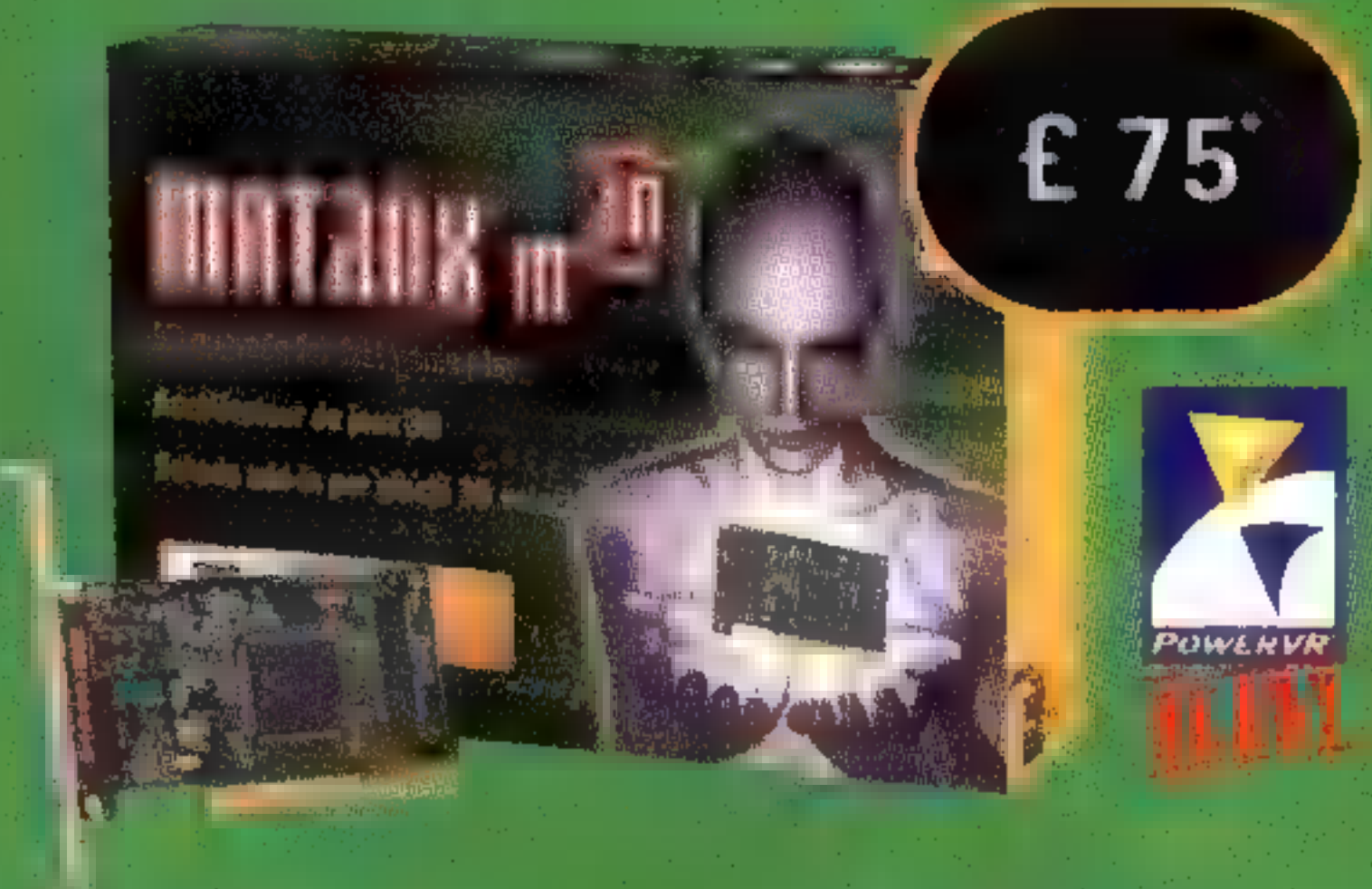
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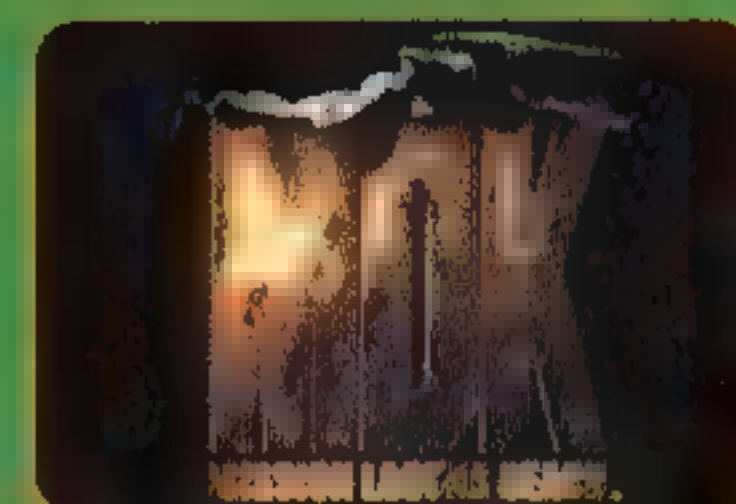
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Oi!!

... Adams

The world of computer games hasn't heard from Douglas Adams since the days of Infocom text adventures. He's finally back though, with what looks like being a whole new direction in the genre. **Paul Presley** caught up with him at the recent ECTS.



Starship Titanic is populated, in true Douglas Adams style, by a host of bizarre robots.

great about those old Infocom games was that, although they were text-only, several thousand years of human culture tells you that you can do an awful lot with text. Add to that the dimension of interactivity that the computer can bring and the effect is that you're locked into a conversation with the machine. Oddly enough, we [The Digital Village] discovered

Terry Jones plays the role of a semi-deranged parrot. It's a part I think he was born to play.

D OUGLAS ADAMS IS SITTING across the table from me, apologising for having an ear filled with swimming pool water. He's just flown over, interrupting his French holiday, to answer a few questions about the forthcoming *Starship Titanic*. Ever since the appearance of *The Hitch Hiker's Guide To The Galaxy*, I've followed the man's work with avid interest. I even enjoyed the Dirk Gently books, for god's sake. That's the great thing about this job; occasionally you get to meet your true heroes. A few years ago it was Buzz Aldrin. Now Douglas Adams. I only hope my tape recorder is working.

PC Zone: It's been some time since you last wrote a computer game, even though you always seemed to be really enthusiastic about the medium. Why the absence?

Douglas Adams: When I first did *Hitch Hiker's*, many years ago for Infocom, I really loved working on it. It seemed very odd though that an author would go through all the slog and pain of writing a book and then, with all the enormous fun of doing a game, they would hand it over to someone else. That seemed to me to be getting the worst of all possible worlds. I found the business of creating and designing a game enormously entertaining, and what was

that the business of creating the illusion of conversation isn't an awful lot to do with technology, but is an awful lot to do with the writing.

So I found those Infocom games very engaging and very interesting. And, of course, what happened in the mid-'80s was that computer graphics came along and suddenly text adventures were dead in the water. Even though you can do an awful lot with text, it doesn't jump around and blink and do other stuff. It just sits on the screen and looks boring. But, of course, when the graphics came along they were all incredibly slow, crude and clunky.

So I thought I'd sit on the bench for a bit and wait till things improved – and in the last few years they've become very good indeed.

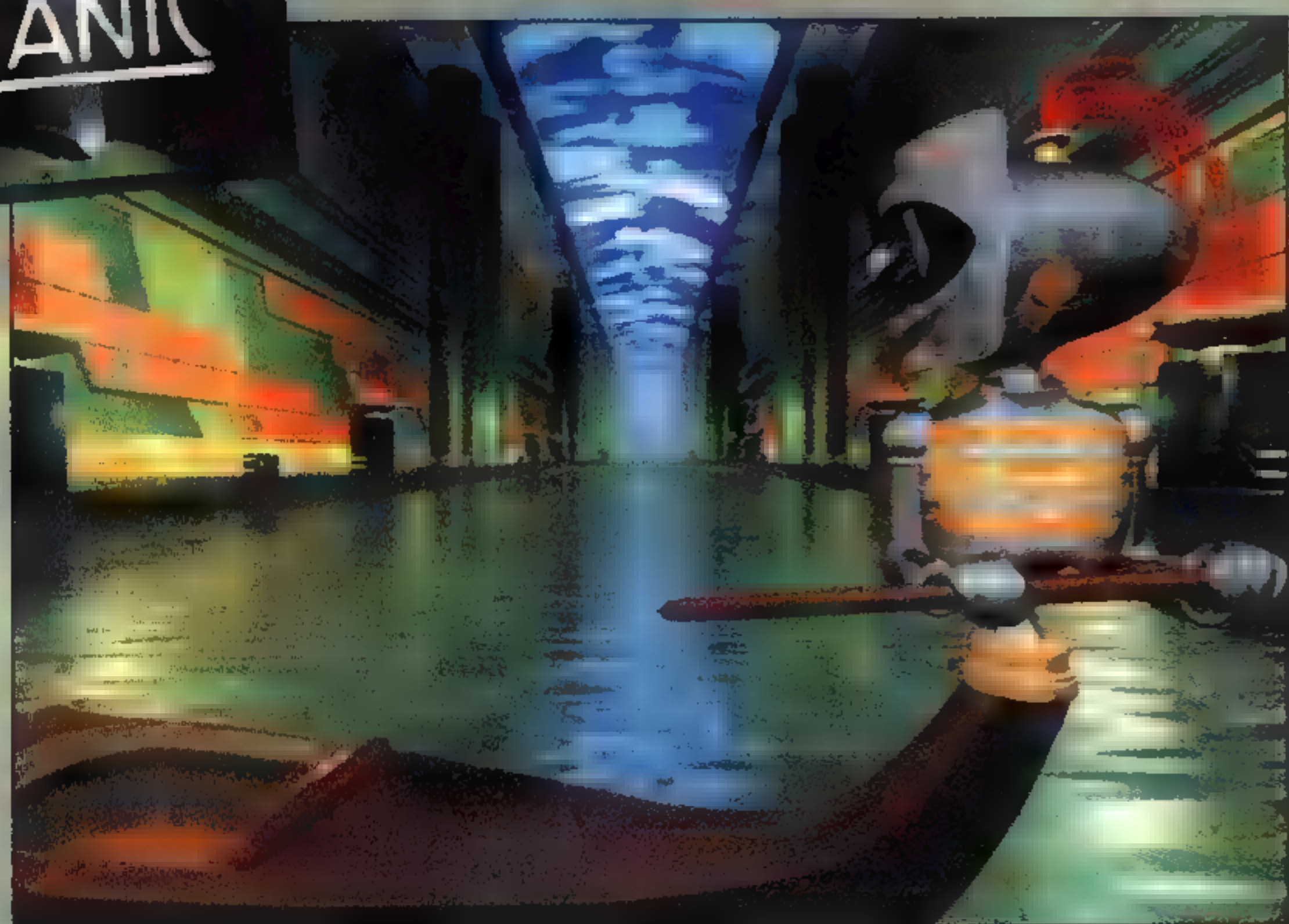
PCZ: *Starship Titanic's* graphics are incredibly rich and detailed. What sort of styles were you going for?

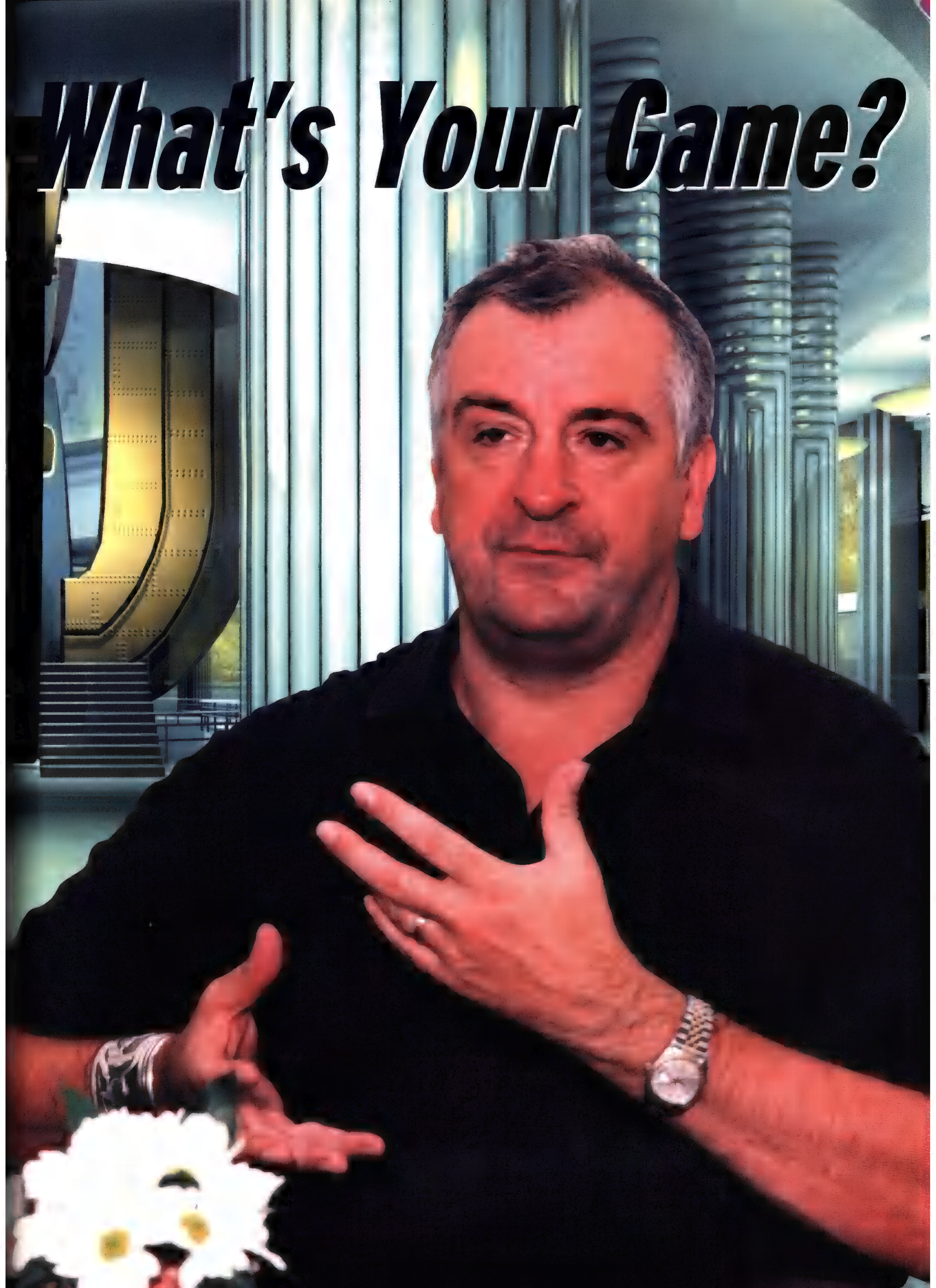
DA: Well, the interior is very *not* like the *Starship Enterprise*. We were keen to get as far away from moulded plastic as possible. We have this remarkable pair of designers, Oscar Cichoni and Isabel Molina. He is a fantasy artist and she is an architect, and between them they produce fantastical architecture. So we worked out with them what the interior of the ship should be like. I'd been very impressed, years ago, going around the *Queen Mary* and marvelling at how much more wonderful this was than the current *QE2*, which is more

DON'T PANIC!



(Above) A rare picture of the actual BBC radio production of Adams' classic *Hitch Hiker's*. (Left) Adams was intent on making the interior of the *Titanic* as far removed from traditional spaceship design as possible.





What's Your Game?



◀ of a floating Holiday Inn. I felt we should capture some of that flavour, the '30s Art Deco. I enlarged it from there and embraced the Chrysler building and the origins of the Art Deco movement, including Tutankhamen's tomb. I tossed in Venice as well – it's not exactly Art Deco but what the hell! And with all that we created an interior which was quite unlike anything you'd think of for a spaceship.

PCZ: Can graphics ever replace the classic feel of the old text adventures?

DA: No. No matter how beautiful these environments may be, and here I'm talking about the pre-rendered games as opposed to 3D action games or whatever, the real sense of engagement you used to get from the Infocom games is gone. Somehow the baby has been thrown out with the bath water. So I thought, let's rescue some of that old technology and bring it up to date. Let's import it into a graphics game and see if we can generate real conversations with the characters once again.

PCZ: How do you overcome the limitations of conversation routines within the game?

DA: Anything you do with conversation contains three stages. There's the input stage – how you communicate with the character – the output stage – where he communicates back with you – and then there's the 'bit in between'. The 'bit in between' is the complicated stuff, trying to determine exactly what the player has put in and what the hell to do about it. If you were doing this in a few years time, you would hope to do the first stage with speech recognition. But at the moment it would work brilliantly five per cent of the time and drive you mad for the other 95 per cent. It's curious because when I spoke about this a few years ago, everyone said, "Well no one will want to type these days." But with the sudden eruption of the web and people using e-mail and chat rooms, everyone is suddenly typing again. We're no longer in a post-literate culture, we're in a post-post-literate culture, which is quite good. So the input is that you type. When one of the robot characters comes into view, you can sit and type questions to it.

The output stage we were hoping to do with text-to-speech, because that gives you maximum flexibility of creating sentences on the fly. The downside is that everyone comes out sounding like Stephen Hawking or a semi-concussed Norwegian. So we decided that we would have to pre-record it. But there's an instant limitation there because it means you can only go to something you've pre-recorded. The way to overcome that problem is with sheer, brute force. We've recorded something like ten hours of tiny dialogue snippets that get assembled on the fly and the chances of anyone exhausting these are remote. Of course, as soon as you take it to actors, even though you lose some of the flexibility of having everything done on the fly, you get great performances for the characters. I'd like to call special attention here to Terry Jones who plays the role of a semi-deranged parrot. It's a part I think he was born to play.

PCZ: Could you tell us about some of the characters?

DA: One of my favourites is a deskbot. Three or four years ago I was going to Australia to write an article for a magazine. You will have noticed that I'm 6ft 5in and one of the things I don't particularly relish is flying to Australia in a coach class seat. The last time I did anything like that I had to spend a week with a physiotherapist. So I said, "I've got to go business class," and they said, "Of course, Mr. Adams. Yes, Mr. Adams." The ticket turned up and it was, of course, coach class, so I phoned them up and they said, "Oh don't worry, we've got an arrangement with British Airways. They'll give you an upgrade. It'll be no problem at all." Now, you always like to turn up to an airport with the ticket you're going to use but I went along anyway, turned up at the desk and

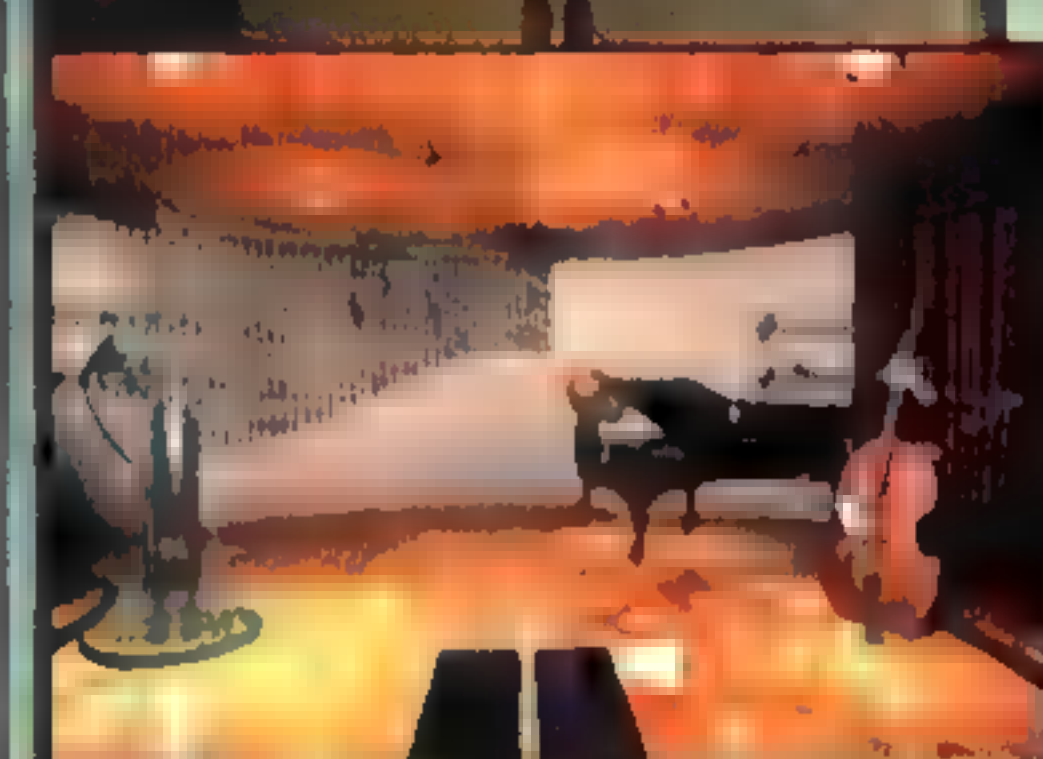
anyone who's familiar with British Airways will know how this next part goes. I went to the desk and said, "I hope you've got an upgrade for me," and the woman behind the desk pulled herself up to her full 5ft 3in and said, "Oh, yes sir? And whose budget is that supposed to come out of?"

That line has been given to the deskbot because you will find yourself, when you start off in the game, in Super Galactic Traveller Class, which is a little bit like World Traveller – ie among the goats and the chickens. You find yourself in this terribly tiny, little boxy room like those sort of things you find in Japanese hotels, where you find yourself gripped by one of the most powerful forces known to modern man – the desire for a free upgrade.

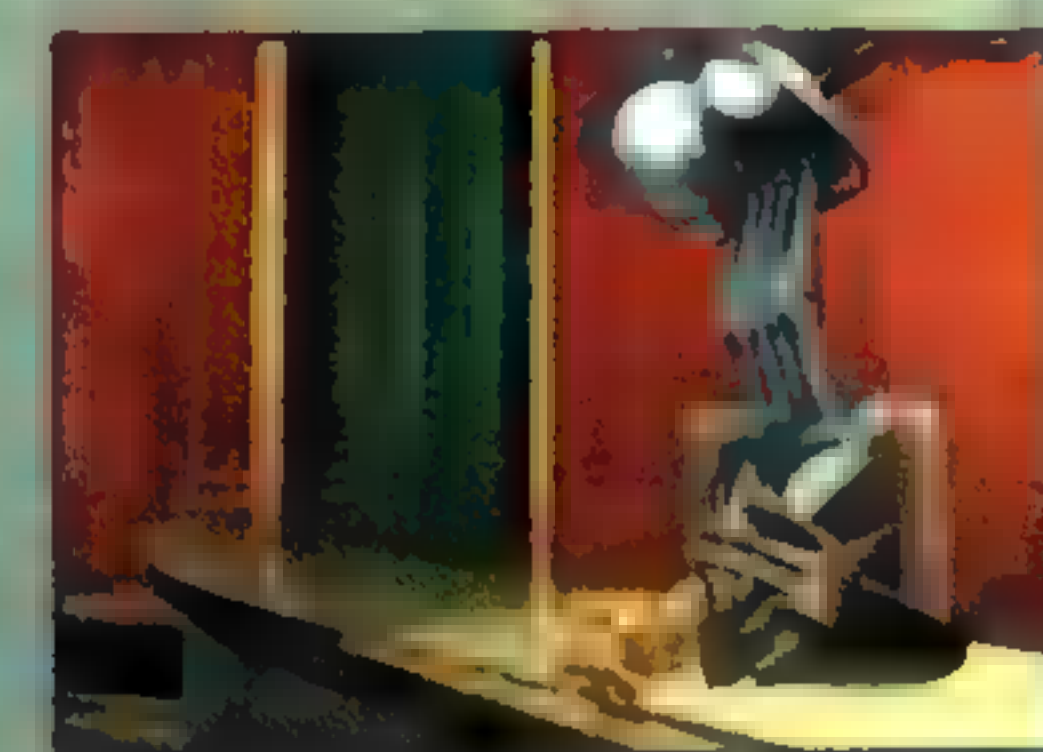
PCZ: You mentioned Terry Jones. Is there anyone else famous behind the voices?

DA: One of the actors I'd like to mention is a great friend of mine called Philip Pope, who is a great character actor and a musician, and the only person I know for whom the nadir of his career was having a number one hit record. When I tell you it was *The Chicken Song*, you'll know why. He plays a number of parts, one of which is the liftbot. He's modelled on the elevator operators you used to get at the BBC's Broadcasting House, all of whom tended to be one-armed men who told lies about the war. So we have a very beautiful creature who's sort of stuck halfway into the wall and therefore one-armed. If you can bear to spend any time at all in the lift you will have to listen to him going on and on about his wartime experiences. The thing is, no one can ever figure out which war it is he's going on about.

At which point we are interrupted by a very stern looking woman from Zablac who insists that Douglas is allowed to have some lunch before he flies back to France to resume his holiday. Another childhood hero met, another ambition fulfilled. You know, this isn't such a bad job when I stop to think about it. **Z**



(Top) I doubt he'll be able to mix a Pan Galactic Gargle Blaster, but never hurts to ask. (Above) The art deco school of design gives Titanic its distinct look.



(Above) The desk-bot. Inspired by Adams' encounters with BA staff. (Left) Economy class luxury. Get that upgrade!



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Actual screen shots

First

Welcome to First Encounter.



H NO, MORE FIRST-PERSON perspective, 3D action games! Our hero Paul Presley brushes up on his Spanish to check out a Quake-clone that could actually be worth taking seriously.

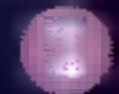
O CCASIONALLY, A SOFTWARE HOUSE'S PR person sits you down and shows you a game that has the potential to knock your socks off. The recent Formula One jobbie from Ubisoft was one. *Starship Titanic* from Ziblat is another, and *Blade*, from Spanish developers Rebel Act Studios, is yet another.

I know what you're thinking: "I bet it's just a plain old Quake clone." Well, you should be ashamed of yourself. Trust me when I say that *Blade* is stunning. Potentially. There isn't a lot to see at the moment, but what Gremlin's PR chap did bring round to our offices generated the kind of crowds not seen since *Quake* came in.

Even on a superficial 'let's judge it by the Graphics' front, we have never seen anything that looks this good. And there's still over a year of development time left! It supports just about every resolution level that your hardware carries, with or without 3D accelerator support (incidentally, all the images on this page are NOT 3D card screenshots), and even at the highest levels there is virtually no slow down—at least there wasn't on our P200 machine.

It uses full 16bit colour palettes to keep up the incredible level of detail, and is enhanced by some of the grooviest lighting effects I have ever seen in a game of this type. Light bounces off any surface around, causing very realistic shadow effects (the assembled crowds nearly broke into applause when they saw a torch-carrying character walk along a corridor and round a corner—the effect was *that* good).

The action in *Blade* is much slower-paced than any of the various 'Quakers' that are popping up. It's more of a role-playing, story-driven sort of game. There's a plot—mystical swords, evil wizards, ancient prophecies etc. and character interaction, with four different races dotted around the land. Player characters have different fighting styles, and are able to run, jump, swim, climb, crouch and fly. The emphasis is also more on hand-to-hand combat, which means the action is more immediate (for me anyway. I never was any good with a racket launcher). But, of course, all the usual networking and internet options are still being included anyway.

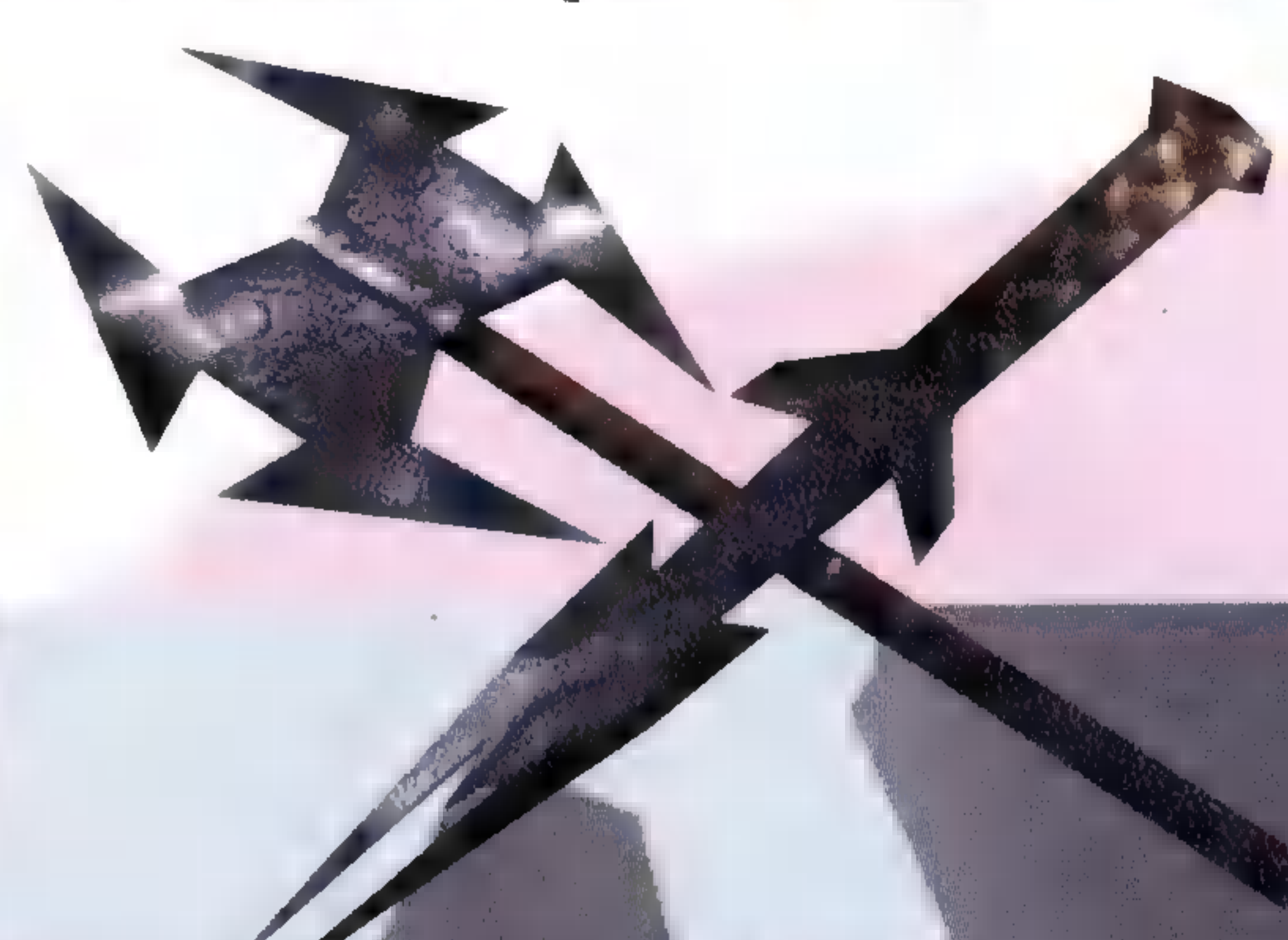
A release date of Winter 1998 means that a lot could happen to *Blade* between now and then, and people still remember all of the promises that were lying made by the Quake team before it appeared. However, Spaniards are generally more reliable than Americans when it comes to long-term promises, aren't they? Except ones to do with fishing. 

Encounter

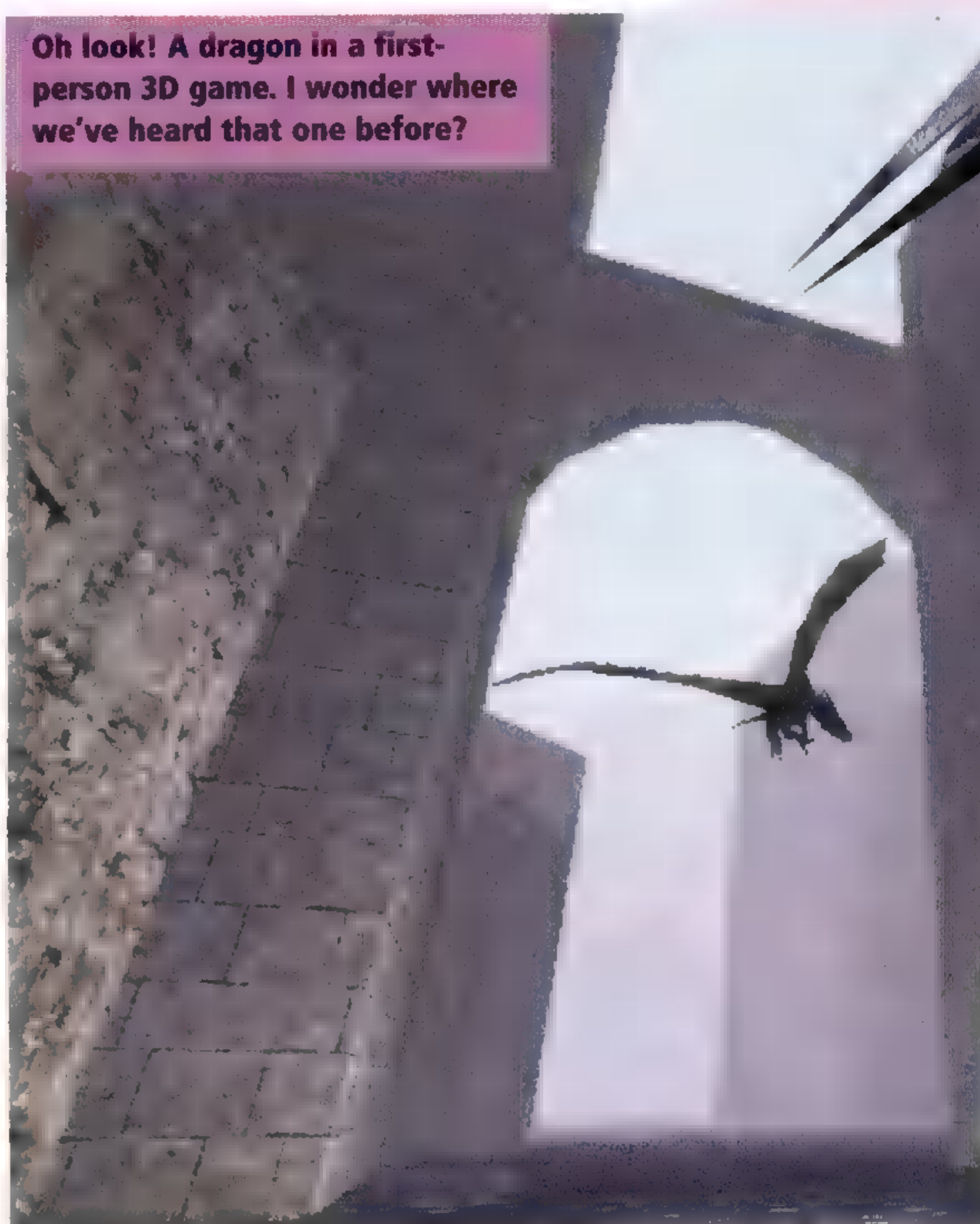
Much more than Hot Shots, but not yer average Blueprint!



Blade



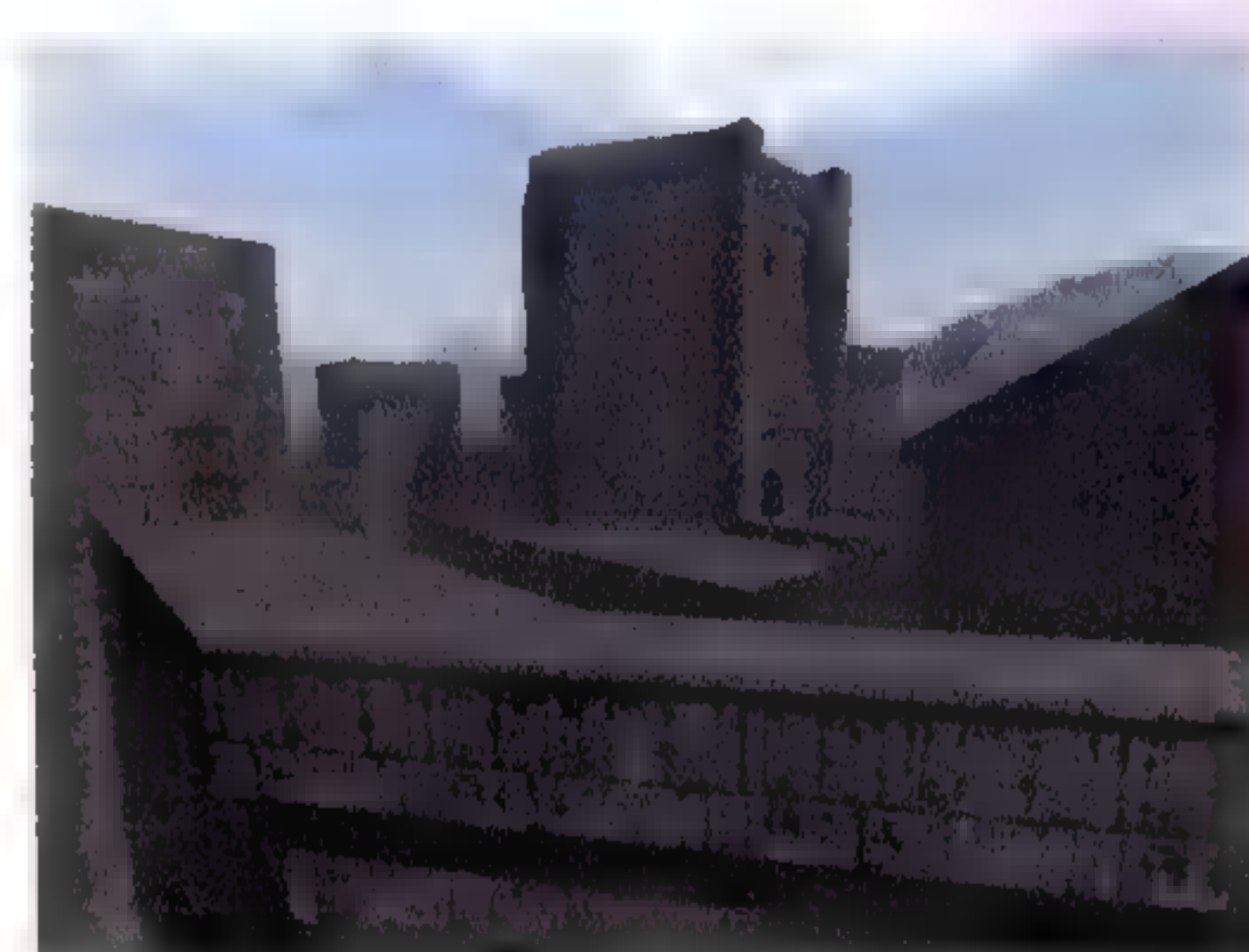
Oh look! A dragon in a first-person 3D game. I wonder where we've heard that one before?



The characters all have individual AI routines and characteristics, and the game is much more than just a blood and guts fest.

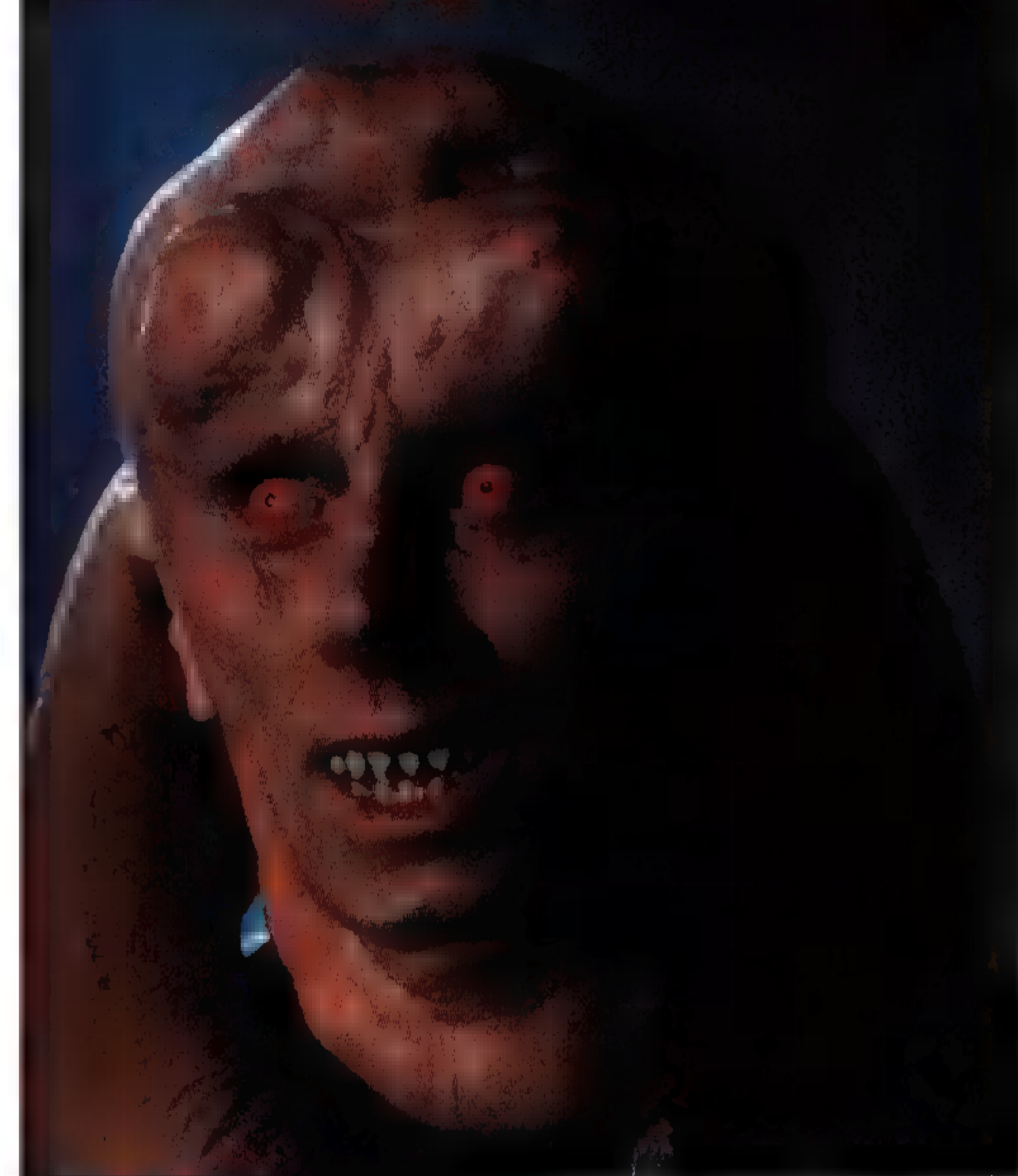


Enano the dwarf started to get pissed off with Justin's "Women and children first" jokes.



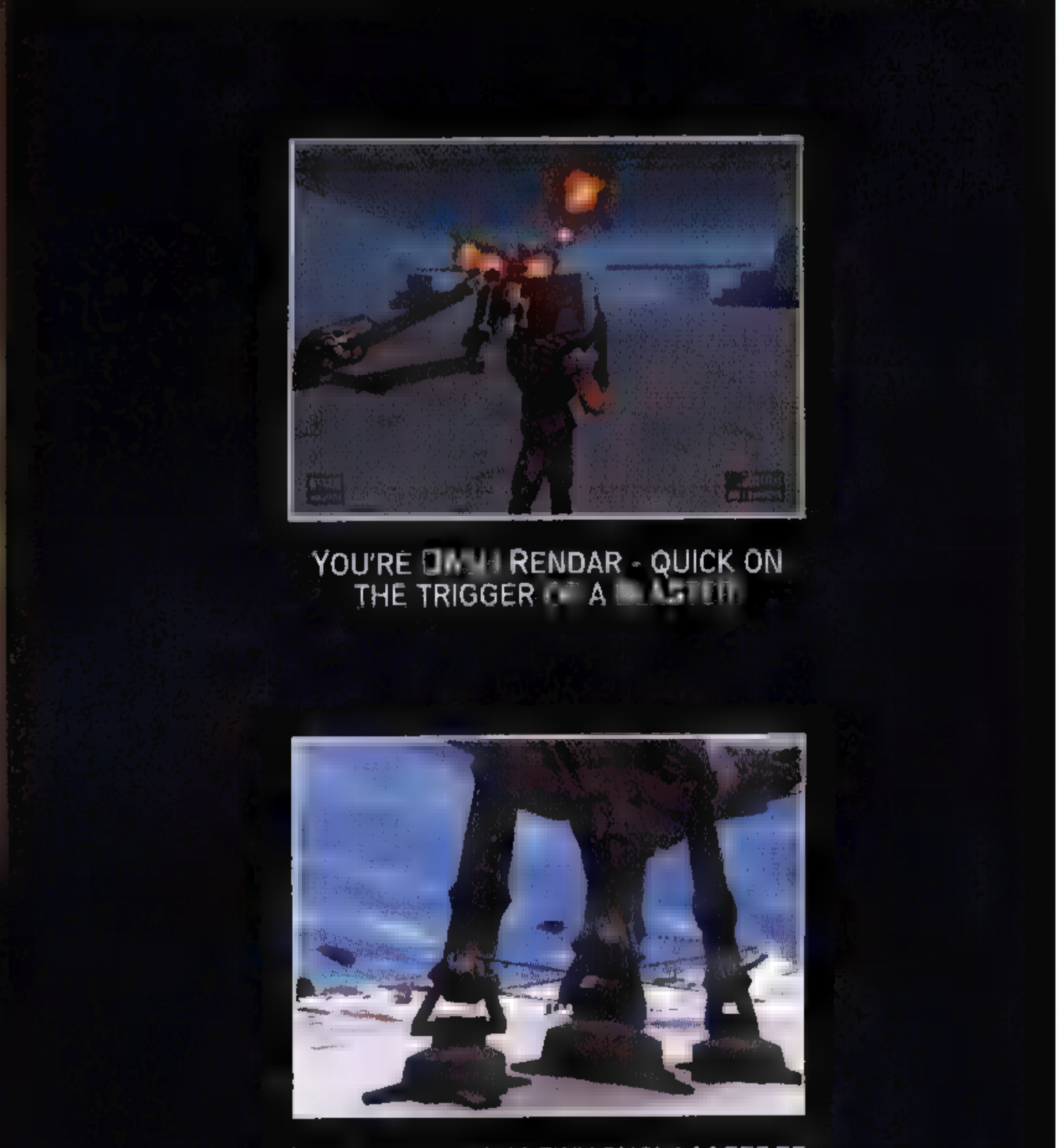
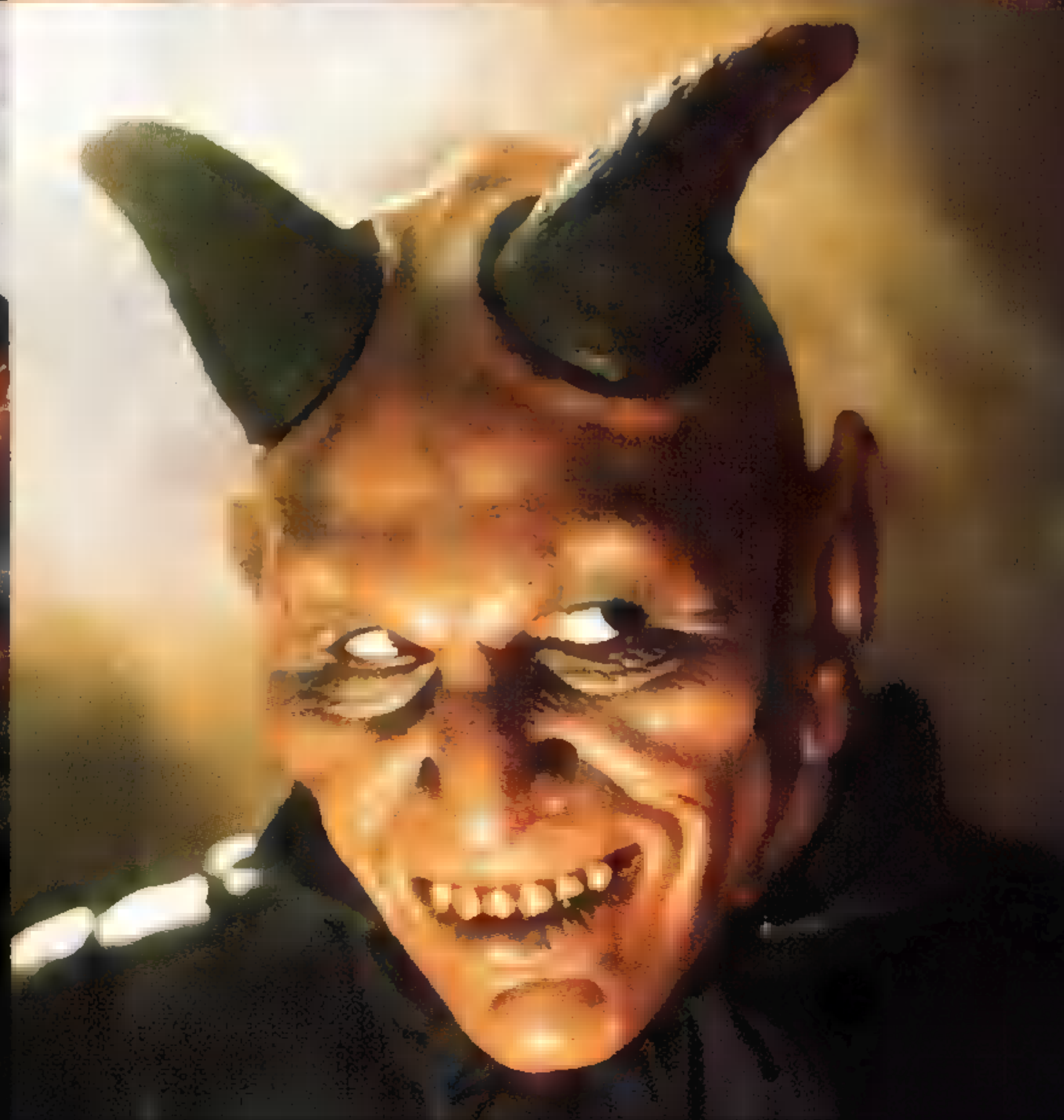
Product details

Title: *Blade*
Developer: Rebel Act Studios
Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
Price: £60
Spec: P133, 16MB, 3D accelerator req.
Release Date: Winter 1998
Telephone: 0114 2753475
Website: www.rebelact.com



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Enter Prince Xizor - the newest villain of the Dark Side. In *Shadows of the Empire*, you'll encounter him along with a host



WHAT'S SHORT, HAS A LITTLE eye in the middle, and rolls off the tongue easily? No, not that. The answer is the title of Ritual Entertainment's first-person shooter - *SiN*. **Charlie Brooker** explains

RITUAL ENTERTAINMENT? WHO ARE THEY? In the past they've been single-handedly responsible for causing work in the PC Zone bunker to grind to a juddering halt. Under their previous moniker, Hipnotic, they created *Scourge of Armagon*, the finest *Quake* add-on known to man (until the recent *PainKeep* anyway) and cause of many an after-hours multiplayer gunfight-gore gala round these parts. Hipnotic added new weapons (such as the cool hammer), new power-ups (that lovely shield), and best of all, plenty of cool new levels. Not just deathmatch arenas either - the single player maps they produced easily out-*Quaked* *Quake* itself. These boys know their level design.

So here's the deal with *SiN*. It's a Windows 95-native first-person shoot 'em up based on a modified version of the *Quake* engine. Ritual's enhancements include the introduction of eye-soothing 16-bit colour textures, coloured lighting, transparent surfaces ('windows' to the layman), advanced AI (we should see characters operating alarms, ducking and running for cover), and destroyable structures. Serial killers will be delighted by the news that it will be possible to blow individual body parts off the enemy. There's also an 'action' key (a la *Doom*), enabling the designers to create complex puzzles and scripted level elements.

As if all that wasn't enough, Ritual are also bungling in a proper storyline for free. Recognising that only the select-lucky few (such as us Zone dungeoneers) have the opportunity to indulge in multiplayer fragfests on a regular basis, the team are concentrating on the single-player game - which means a continually unfolding storyline replete with cutscenes, and doubtless a surprise twist ending as well.

Finally, *SiN* will fully support all them 3D accelerator cards: a spoogetworthy OpenGL version of the game is being developed simultaneously with the main Non-GL release. So, that's the recipe. All we have to do now is wait until we get our hands on the game itself. Then we'll be able to tell you how it measures up against the other 6000 *Quake*-likes that are on their way. One thing's for sure - 1998 is going to be a truly pure sodden year.

SiN on the Web: If you go to a search engine and start hunting around for 'sin', the chances are you're going to come across something rather risqué. Anyway, to save you from all that, here's a list of some handy sites where you can garner your latest *SiN* news.

• www.sincity.stomped.com

Comprehensive *SiN* guide from the people who brought you the superb 'Stomped' *Quake* site

• www.ritual.com/games/SiN/sinpress.htm

This is Ritual Entertainment's very own *SiN* site

• www.activision.com/games/action/sin/

and this is Activision's

• sin.questgate.net

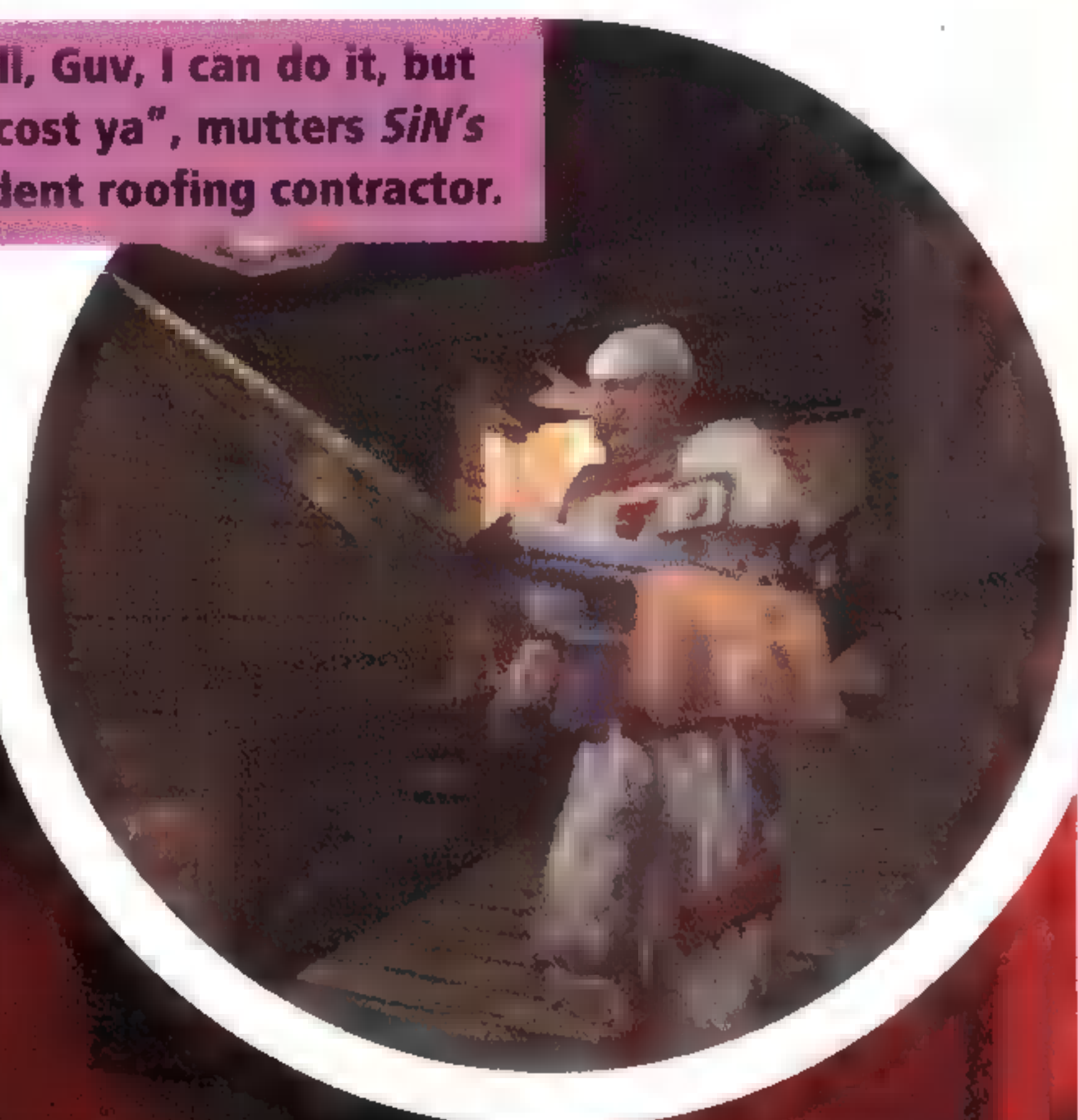
Loads of *SiN* screenshots, news, and the opportunity to 'finger' the *SiN* team. ●

SiN

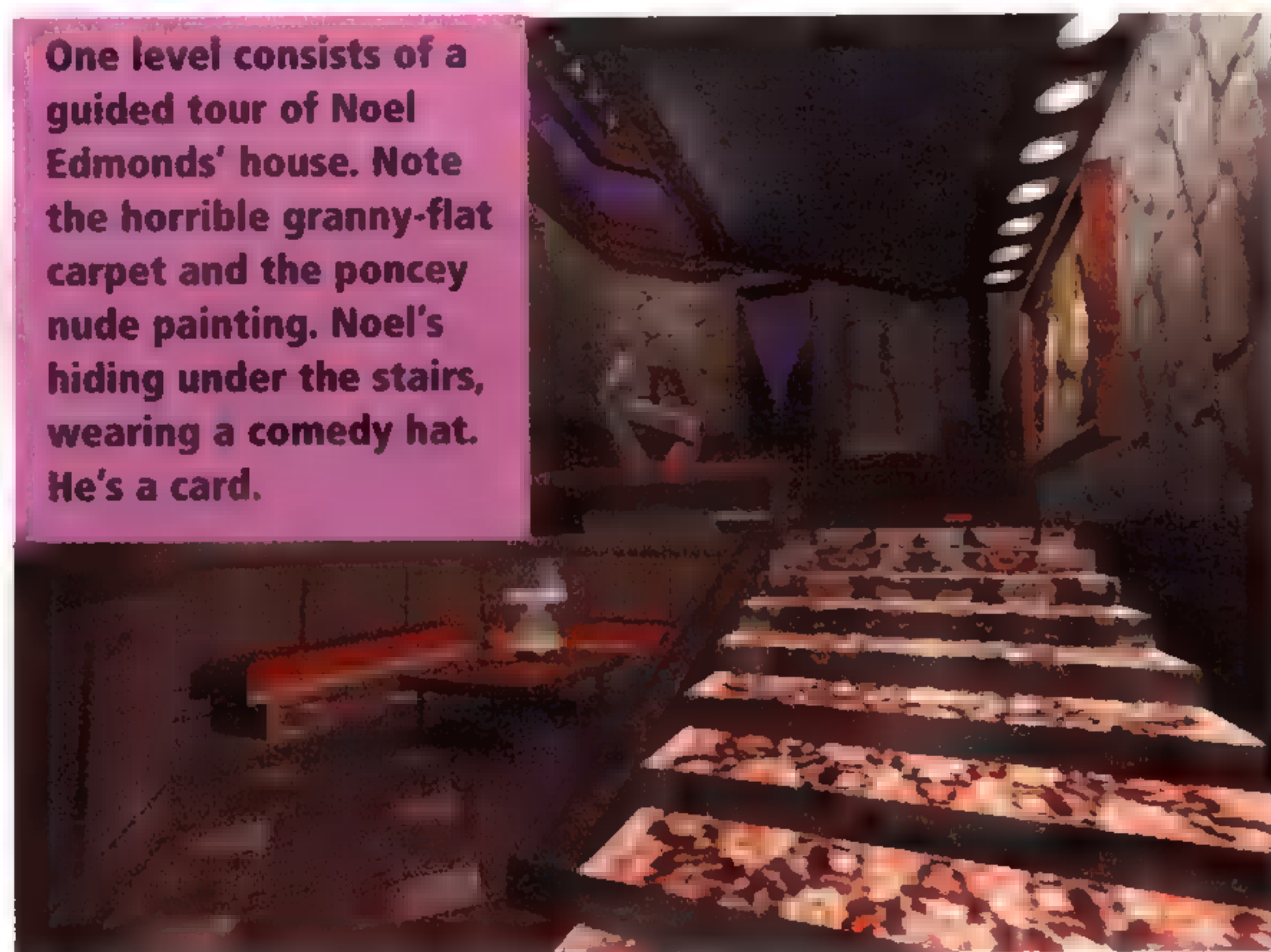
"Please sir - may I go to the toilet?"



"Well, Guv, I can do it, but it'll cost ya", mutters *SiN*'s resident roofing contractor.



One level consists of a guided tour of Noel Edmonds' house. Note the horrible granny-flat carpet and the poncey nude painting. Noel's hiding under the stairs, wearing a comedy hat. He's a card.



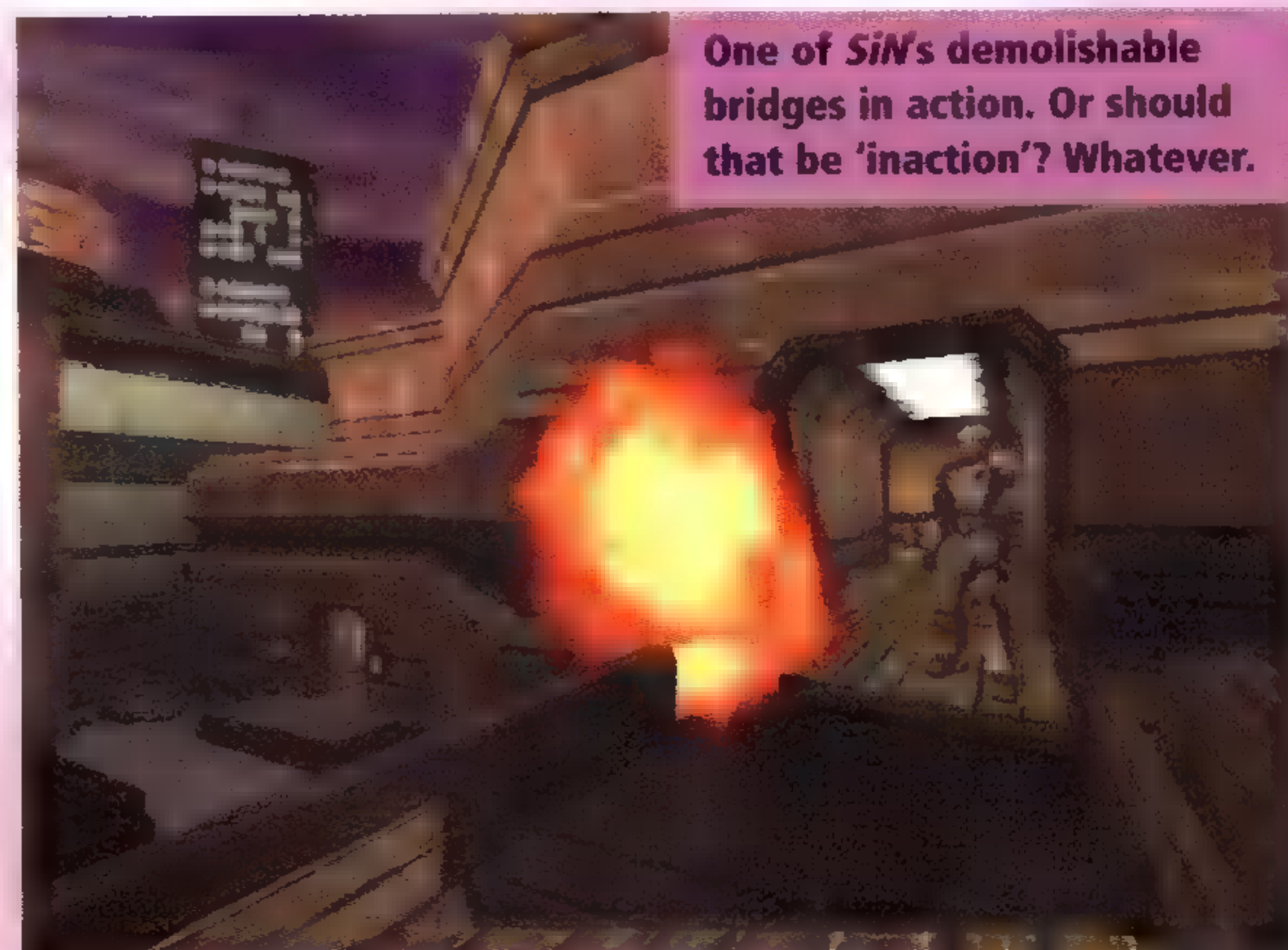
Who said it looks like *Quake*?



The new catwalk fashion in Paris.



One of *SiN*'s demolishable bridges in action. Or should that be 'inaction'? Whatever.



Product details

Developer: Ritual
Publisher: Ritual Entertainment
Price: £19.99
Spec: 100%
Release Date: Spring '98
Telephone: 01895 456 700
Website: www.sincity.stomped.com

"The best C&C clone in the universe."

PCFORMAT

"The best C&C clone
in the universe."

The Mirror

"Out-of-this-world
action game."

FOCUS

"Dark Colony is clearly in a
galaxy of its own."

NetGamer

"The missions are excellent for one player,
but very few games are as much fun in
multi-player mode."

**ULTIMATE
PC**

"The gameplay is gripping and
far more challenging than C&C.
The graphics are gorgeous and
the network game is quite
simply brilliant."

PC GAMER

"Large-scale graphics that
blow away anything the genre's
seen until now. It's got enough
originality to stand out
from the herd."

PCHOME

"Take 2 has managed to do
just what Westwood couldn't
with the troop movement. It gets
the thumbs-up, with enough of a
different feel from C&C to make it
enjoyable to play."

PC review

"As the sons-of-Red-Alert face off to
fight for the crown, Dark Colony has
effectively kneed all its opponents
between the legs. A manoeuvre
worthy of Jackie Chan, consider-
ing just how many oppo-
nents it faces, *Dark Reign*,
Conquest Earth,
Starcraft....."

**COMMANDING RESPECT
CONQUERING ALL**



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WELL, IF IT ISN'T YET ANOTHER 3Dfx-enhanced shoot-em-up game. You could be forgiven for getting them mixed up. Well, we beg your pardon. We never promised you a rose garden. Here's **Charlie Brooker**, trying to make some sense of it all.

SEE, IT'S ALL CHANGE ROUND 'ERE: THERE'S a steady trickle of PC-CD 3Dfx-only games dripping into the digital sink, and the chances of it ever abating are, to be honest, slim. When you witness one in action, it's easy to see why: they make the Playstation look like a Vic 20. Luddites beware. If you haven't got a card by Christmas, you may as well hollow your PC out and use it as a breadbin or something, because it will be no use for anything else.

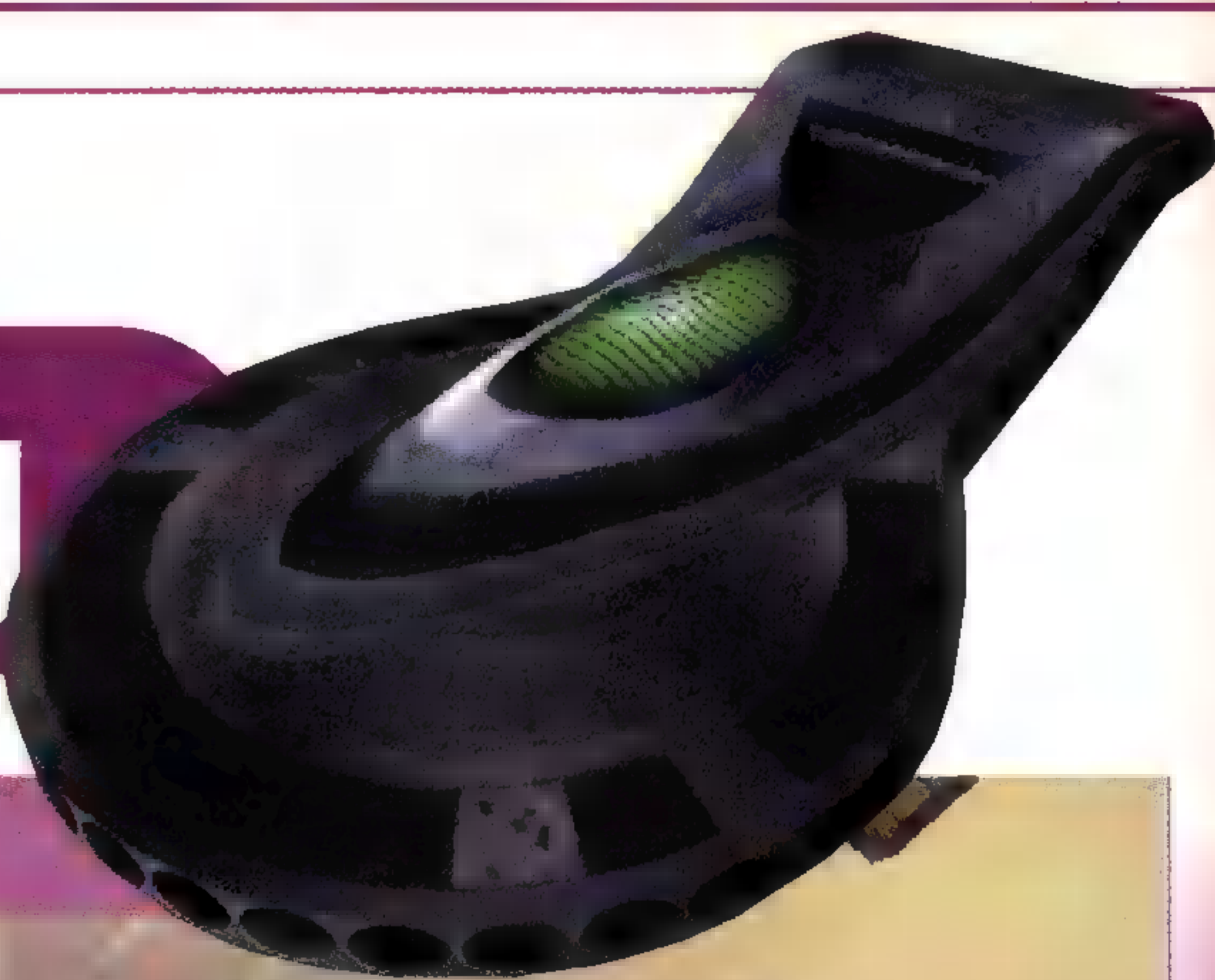
Consider this latest bloody rag of evidence: *Incoming* from Rage Software. Previously a 'mere' developer responsible for olde worlde stalwarts such as *Striker*, and more recently *Jonah Lomu Rugby* and *Trash It!*, Rage are currently in the process of establishing themselves as a fully-fledged software publishing house. As *Incoming* marks their debut, it's a fair bet they'll be straining their gaming bowels in an attempt to poo out a gigantic barnstorming log of a game. One that's long, consistent, perfectly tapered, and smells of perfume instead of brown arse pate.

From what we've seen of *Incoming* so far, they may be onto a good thing. It's a 3D action game which aims to offer "death and destruction to all men" via a wide selection of gameplay options and an up-to-16-at-once multiplayer orgy. Comprising of 42 missions, spread across four different worlds, the game also provides a full spectrum of weaponry and vehicle classes, ranging from common-or-garden fighter craft and tanks to *Star Wars*-style AT AT walkers – although whether you'll also be able to pilot a pogo stick or Sinclair C5 was unclear as we were going to press.

These glorious screenshots also suggest it's a 3Dfx only release. Indeed, the minimum spec is a meaty P133 with 16Mb of RAM, plus the aforementioned 3Dfx glima. Something of a gamble for a debut release, but as their

development track record shows, Rage are capable of producing luscious 3D visuals without the aid of any show-off cards – see *Darklight Conflict*. *Incoming* therefore, is likely to be nothing short of spectacular in the eye candy stakes. Stay tuned to your probing, strobing, disrobing *Zone* for the exclusive review in a future issue. 1

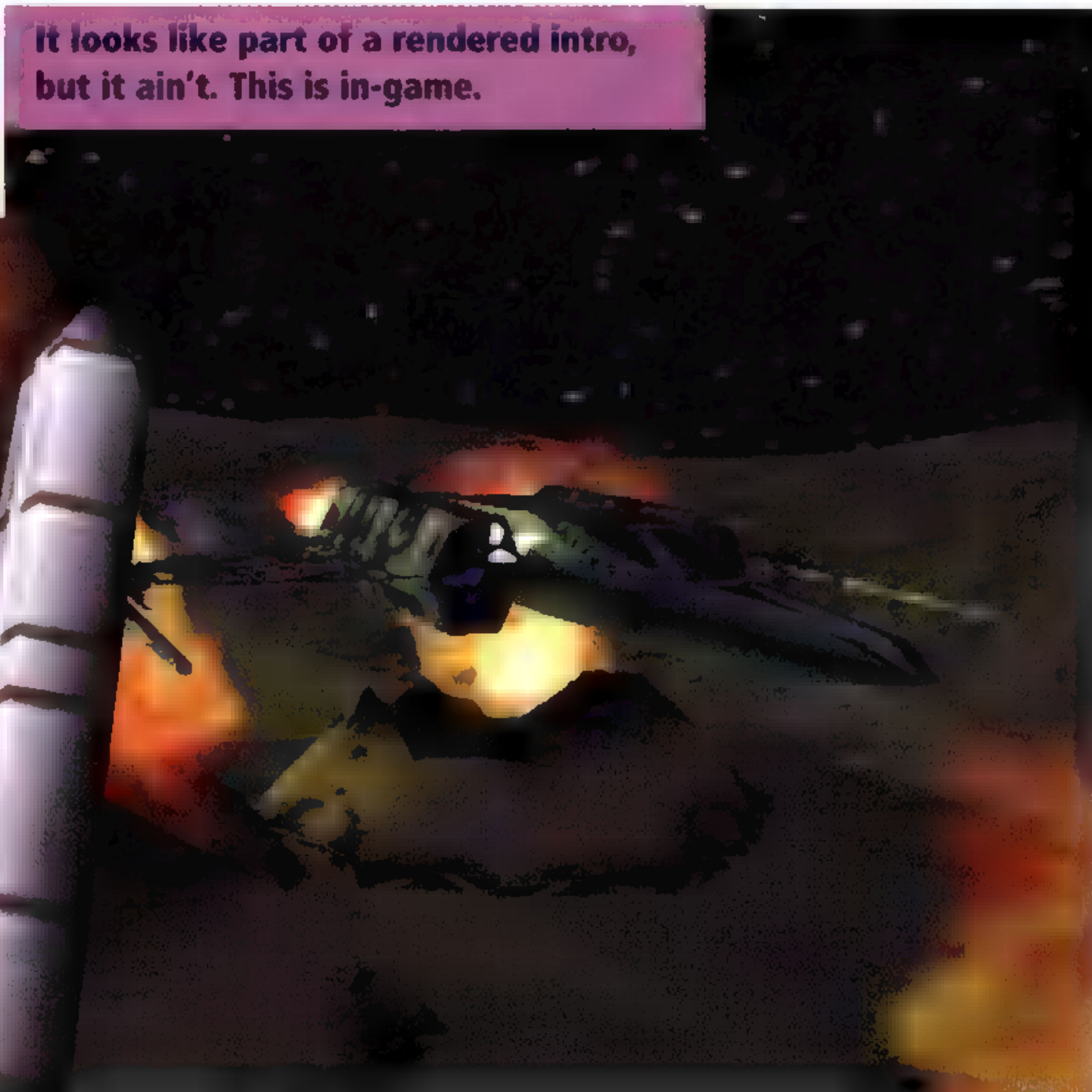
Incoming



I'm not sure what that is, but I wouldn't want to accidentally sit on it.



It looks like part of a rendered intro, but it ain't. This is in-game.



On level 16, you destroy Leeds. And not a moment too soon, say we.



Sometimes you'll find yourself in a ground based vee-hick-ull...



Product details

Title: *Incoming*
Developer: Rage Software
Publisher: Rage Software
Price: £11.95
Spec: P133, 16 MB RAM, 3Dfx
Release Date: December
Telephone: 0151 933 2688
Website: www.rage.co.uk

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B

LUE IS MORE **RICHIE** Shoemaker's colour, although he has been known to wear black silk panties, but then no-one is supposed to know that.

FILMS AND GAMES ARE STRANGE BEDFELLOWS. Up until recently they've never really got on. Usually an excuse to cash in on a big name, the game of the film more often than not just took a popular genre and loosely slapped the film's storyline around it. Anyone remember *Waterworld*? Exactly.

With the soon to be released *Men In Black* from Gremlin, things could be changing for the better. Steve Banks, producer at publishers Gremlin, is keen to point out why the developers have plumped for the third-person perspective, similar to that used in both *Alone in the Dark* and *Resident Evil*. "It was felt that the mixture of rendered backgrounds and 3D characters would allow a more cinematic feel to the game. We are trying to recreate the same feel and atmosphere in the film, and it was decided that the rendered backdrops would offer far better visuals than standard textured 3D."

We all had a quick squint at the game at the recent ECTS, and from what we saw, the game looks the business.

Considering that every man and his dog has jumped on-board the 3Dfx wagon, it's quite surprising that 3D acceleration isn't needed to experience the action in *MIB* first-hand. Steve explains:

"Since the 3D in the game isn't intensive, 3D accelerator cards aren't really necessary. A patch may appear at a later date to enhance the game's special effects, but it runs just fine without one." So maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but surely sometime soon. So, are 3D cards the future of games? "Absolutely. The more games that use 3D cards the better. People are sick of the need for faster and faster processors, and now we have cheap 3D cards it's opening the doors for developers and players alike."

So it looks great even without hardware acceleration, but for those of us who have seen the film, what's new? Well, you can play as either Agent J (Will Smith), K (Tommy Lee Jones) or L (Linda Fiorentino), and although there are training missions, aliens and weapons from the film, there will also be a hell of a lot more. There will be four very different missions, based in the Arctic, in alien caves, in an Amazonian mining town, and on an island. Each agent will behave differently to different situations, and other people in the game will face up to the three agents in different ways. There will also be new weapons, new aliens and some dastardly puzzles to get your head around. Let's just hope they don't include *that* song.

Men In Black



The lush rendered backgrounds certainly do justice to the sets in the film.



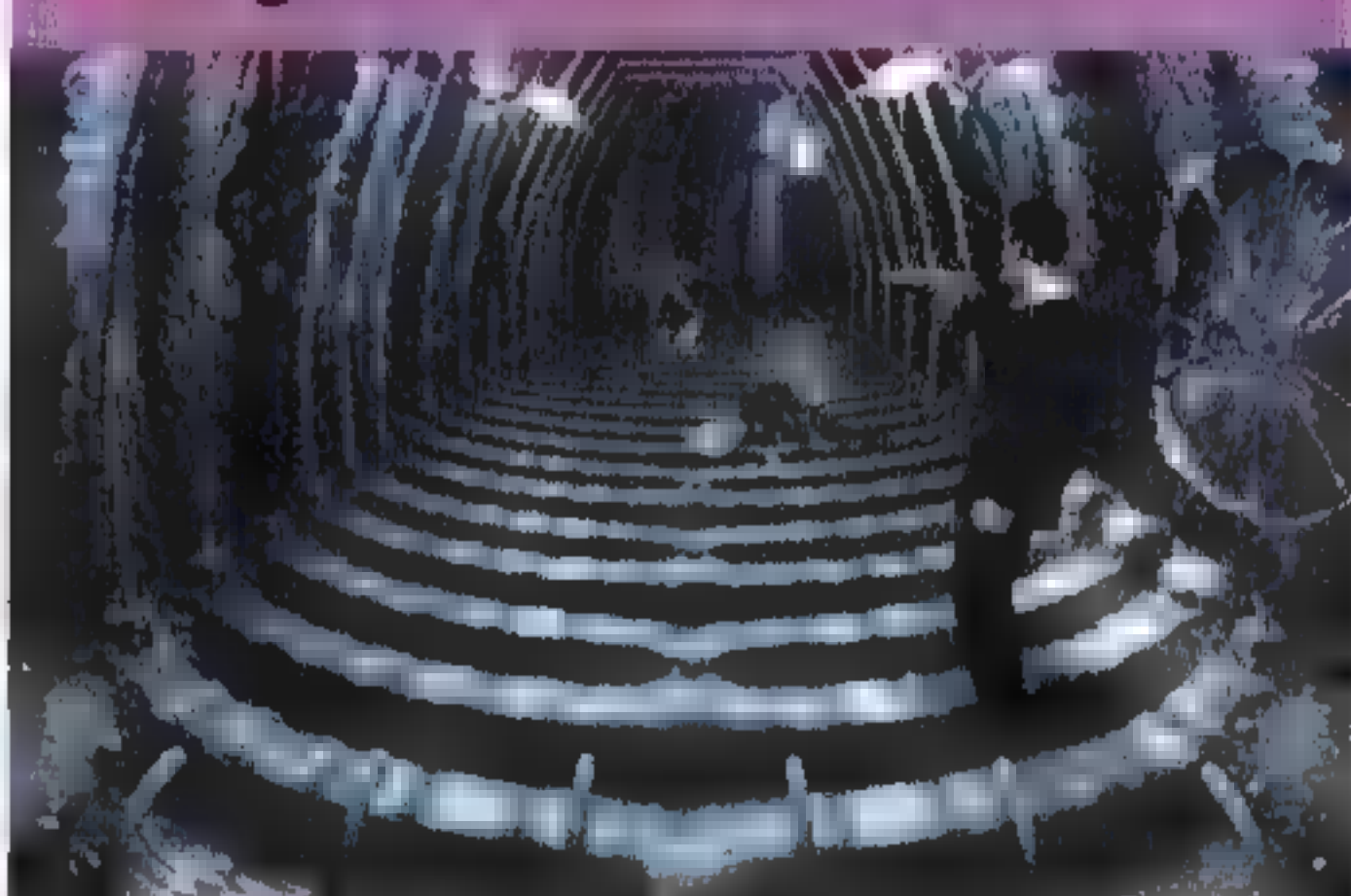
The designers have used the texture-mapped faces of the film's characters and incorporated them to great effect.



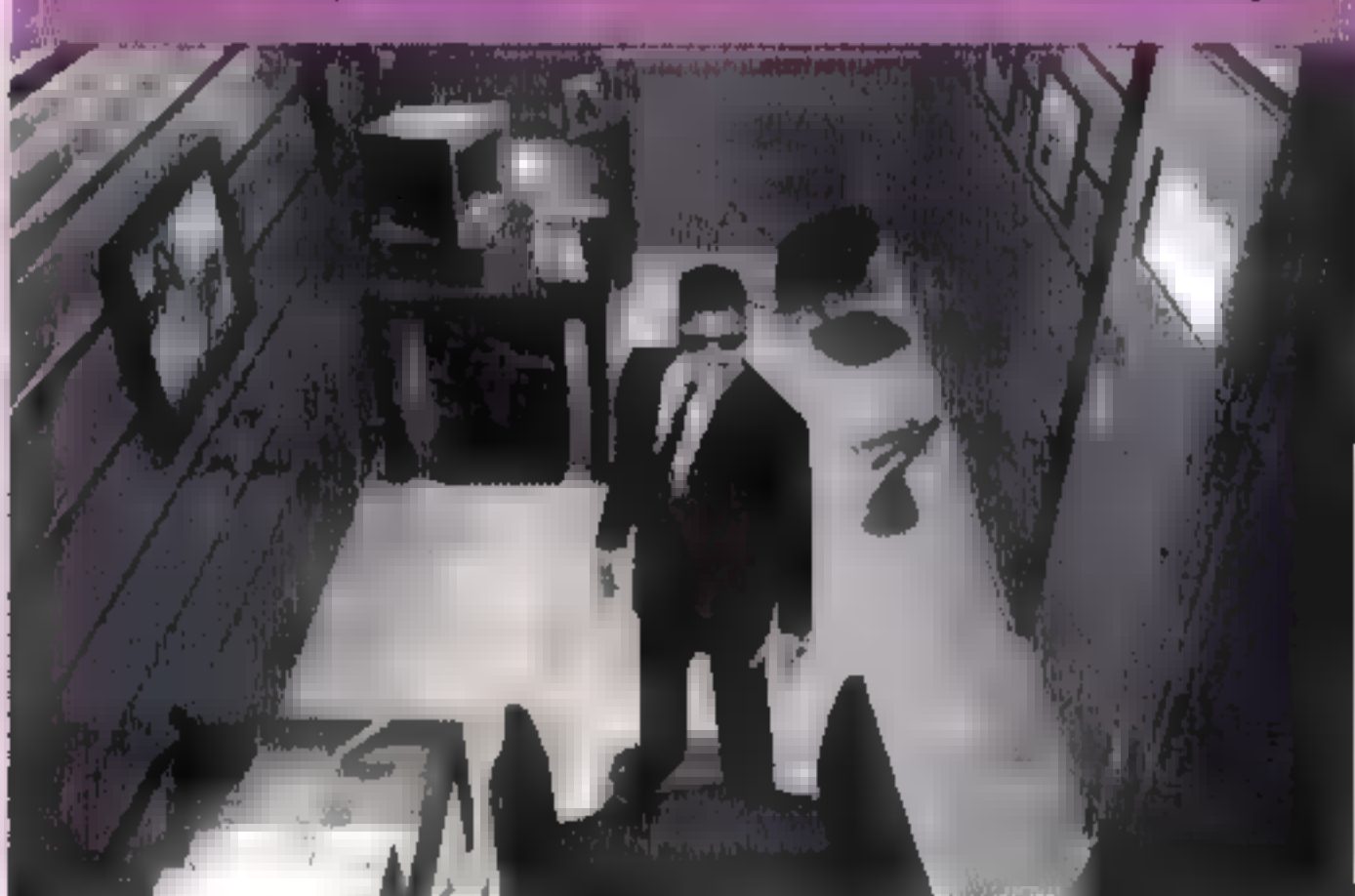
There'll be new aliens and weapons, too.



The game will blend action...



with exploration and puzzle solving.



Product details

Title: Men in Black
Developer: The Design League
Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
Price: £19.95
Spec: P120
Release Date: 7th November
Telephone: 01142 534333
Website: www.gremlin.co.uk

At this point,
an army might be useful!



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"Utterly Brilliant!" PC Zone September 97

SENSIBLE SOCCER 2000



Having wasted much of his sorry existence playing various incarnations of *Sensible Soccer*, **Steve Hill** was the obvious candidate to take an exclusive look at the all-new 3D version. He even turned up on time, which was something of a first.



“Sensi 2000 also caters for those who would rather spit, chew gum and gesticulate from the sidelines.”



SENSIBLE SOCCER, SENSI, SENSIBLE WORLD Of Soccer, SWOS; call it what you will, anyone who knows anything about anything acknowledges it as the consummate football game, pissing on its rivals from some considerable height. Not everyone realises this though. Its disparagers point to the simplistic graphics and scoff dismissively. These people are, of course, wrong.

If you want realistic graphics, look out of the window. Christ-on-a-bike, if good graphics meant good games we'd all be sat around playing *Feeble Files*.

Nevertheless, you can't get away with that sort of thing anymore; market forces dictating that 3D graphics are virtually compulsory. Besides, with umpteen updates, SWOS had been released enough times to test even the keenest of fans. Of course, Sensible were fully aware of all this, and for the last couple of years have been beavering away at *Sensi 2000* at their secret base in Saffron Walden, home of

antiques expert and leather-skinned lothario, 'John' Lovejoy. Lurking unobtrusively among the trinket shops is the place where the magic is made: the Sensible Software office – a rancid office mattress and pillow providing testament to the team's dedication.

Here, Hare, here

So, how to improve upon a classic, and indeed why? Rather than sit around trying to come up with an answer to this, we decided it would be easier to ask Jon Hare, seeing as he runs the show.

"Because people said they wanted 3D graphics. There was a bit of a backlash against *Sensi Soccer* not looking very good, as you may or may not be aware of. I'm sure you are."

Oh yes.

"But quite recently, in the last six months or so, there's been this thing that everyone's had their pretty 3D graphics for the sake of it, but what about playability? Up until *International Superstar Soccer* came out, there wasn't really anything which used 3D graphics that was of acceptable playability, to be honest."

As anyone who knows anything about anything will also acknowledge, Konami's *International Superstar Soccer* is another mighty fine football game. So, having established that *Sensi* is great, and that *ISS* is great...



(Top) Another day at the Sensible office, Jon Hare second from right. (Above) Motion capture duties, with Ipswich Town's Simon Milton (left).



Product details

Developer: Sensible Software

Publisher: GT Interactive

Website: www.sensible.com

Release Date: December



(Above and right) The view remains the same, although a closer look reveals elaborately motion captured players.

"What we're trying to do is take the best features of *Sensi Soccer* and *ISS* and put them together to what we think people want. The only way to do it is to have a big enough view to see what the hell's going on."

Bluff old traditionalists will be relieved to hear this, with the classic top-down *Sensi* view being maintained, although the titchy, grinning, mad-eyed players have been usurped by more sophisticated, motion-captured characters.

Motion sickness

With a lot of football games, elaborate motion-capture often detracts from the playability, although Jon is adamant that this won't be the case with *Sensi 2000*.

"Playability is more important than what it looks like. But we can make it look nice anyway, and use motion capture, but use it in a way which forces it to act more like old animated graphics used to work. This gives you more control and better playability. The problem is, if you're not careful with motion-capture it can dictate how long

everything takes, how long you have to wait between button presses and stuff. At the moment we're in the process of tuning that to get it perfect."

Who are you?

With the possibility of seven football games being released in time for Christmas, it's an extremely competitive market. Despite this, Jon appears to be unconcerned.

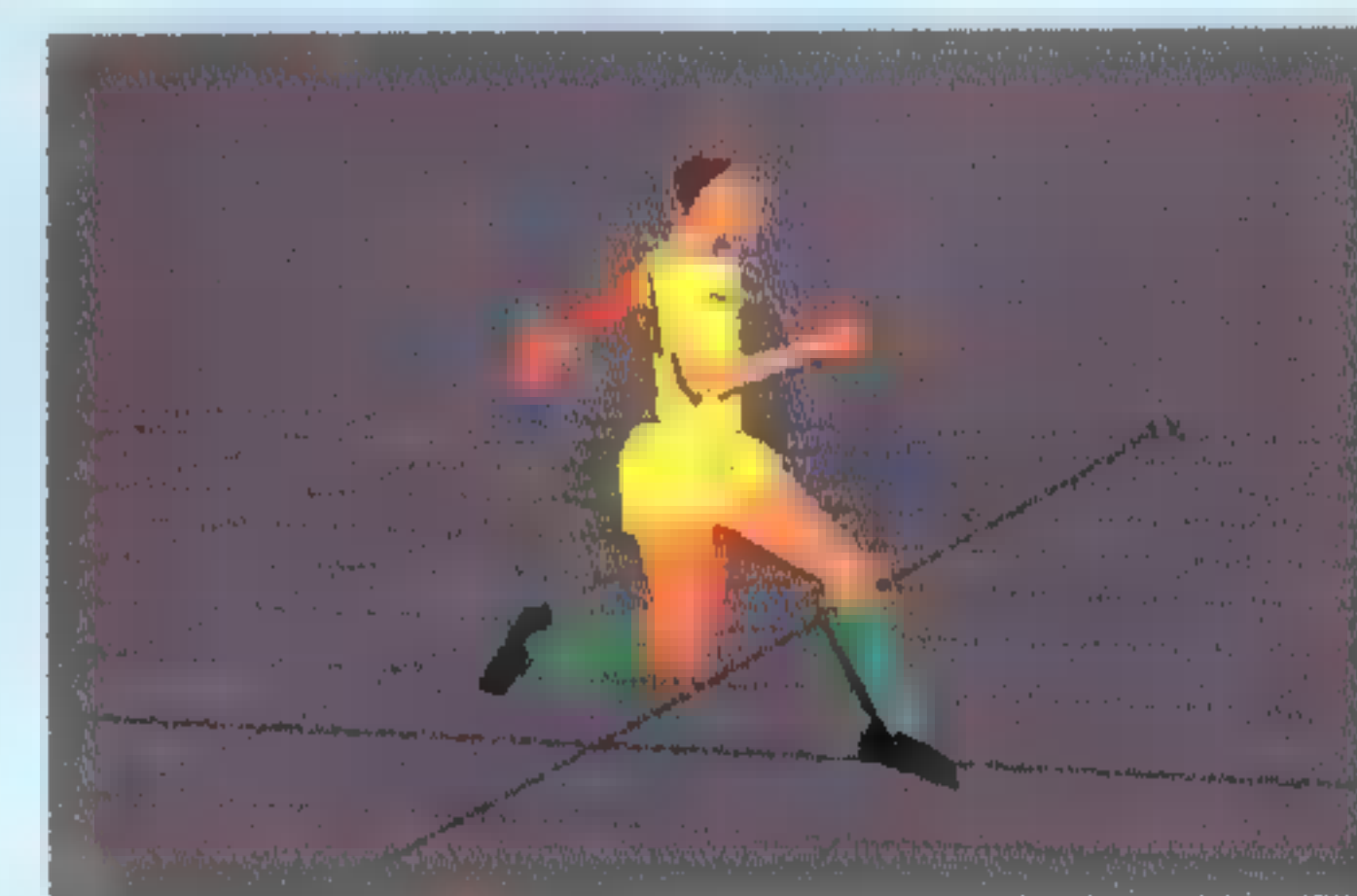
"I'm not bothered about any of them. I think they all have a clue as to what they think they're doing. It's not necessarily true that all of them don't know about football, but a lot of people who are programming football games don't understand what football's about. They don't understand what they're trying to recreate."

Kill your television

"People who tend to go for football realism tend to go for something which looks like football on the telly. The problem is, when you play football it seems really different to when you watch it on the telly, and as a player of a [computer] game, your mentality or psychology is more like someone playing the game than someone watching it. So you need to recreate what it's like to play the game."

The problem is, a lot of playing the game is running - which is hard work - hanging around waiting for the ball to come to you, and then getting

clobbered down by some great big bloke. But the active bits of the game - the bit you



(Above) That there fancy motion capture in full effect.

More, more, more

Sensible Soccer 2000 is the 3D equivalent of the first ever *Sensible Soccer*, so has no transfers, although the coaching aspect has been completely revamped. Clearly the millennial tag lends itself to a *SWOS 2000* though, along with the inevitable World Cup and Euro Championship versions, and - time permitting - the Auto Windscreens Trophy Deluxe, Watney Cup, Texaco Trophy and Debenhams Cup Special Editions. Maybe.

One becomes three

Since time began, *Sensible Soccer* has relied on a control method whereby one button does everything. This is no longer the case. From now on, manual dexterity will be tested to the full with the addition of a 'steal' button, or soft tackle, and a further button which gives a burst of speed. Much like *ISS* then, which has clearly influenced the development of *Sensi 2000*. As Jon Hare says, "I do feel that *ISS* is very much like *Kick Off 2* was, when we did *Sensible Soccer* initially – it's brilliant but it's flawed. It's got hideously irritating things that make you throw the controller on the floor, but nevertheless it's a brilliant game. I feel that we're going to get the balance right."

find interesting – is your positional sense as to where you run to, and what you do in the split second you've got on the ball: to try and get it round the guy in front of you, to make a good pass or have a good shot for your team, or to get a tackle in and stop them attacking. All those are split second decisions, and what we've tried to recreate in *Sensi Soccer* is the environment where the player – when he's playing – can feel like someone who plays football. So he can see where his team-mates are, because you've got the vision. Also, you've got a split second to make a decision before the ball's taken off you. So it recreates the feel of football more from a player's point of view."

On the bench

As with previous versions, *Sensi 2000* also caters for those who would rather spit, chew gum, and gesticulate wildly from the sidelines than get their boots dirty, in that there is a management option, albeit without transfers. This gives you the opportunity to compare your management skills with Alex Ferguson, although there's no Keeganesque resignations and tantrums. While coaching a team, the view will be fully zoomed in – like on the telly – rather than the overhead affair. This clearly makes sense, as Jon explains.

"From a management point of view, getting it to look like the telly is brilliant because you're not worried about the options of where you might pass to. You're only worried about where the ball actually is, so then you can come in a lot closer. But when you're the player, you might want to pass it 40 yards anywhere around you, and you've got to see a minimum of 80 yards radius to emulate that."



Dress it up anyway you like, Scottish football is rubbish.



Sensi 2000 incorporates the premier divisions of most of the world's developed countries, including emphatically researched squads. The Spanish first division features here, with the Ronaldo-less Barca.

The Sensible option

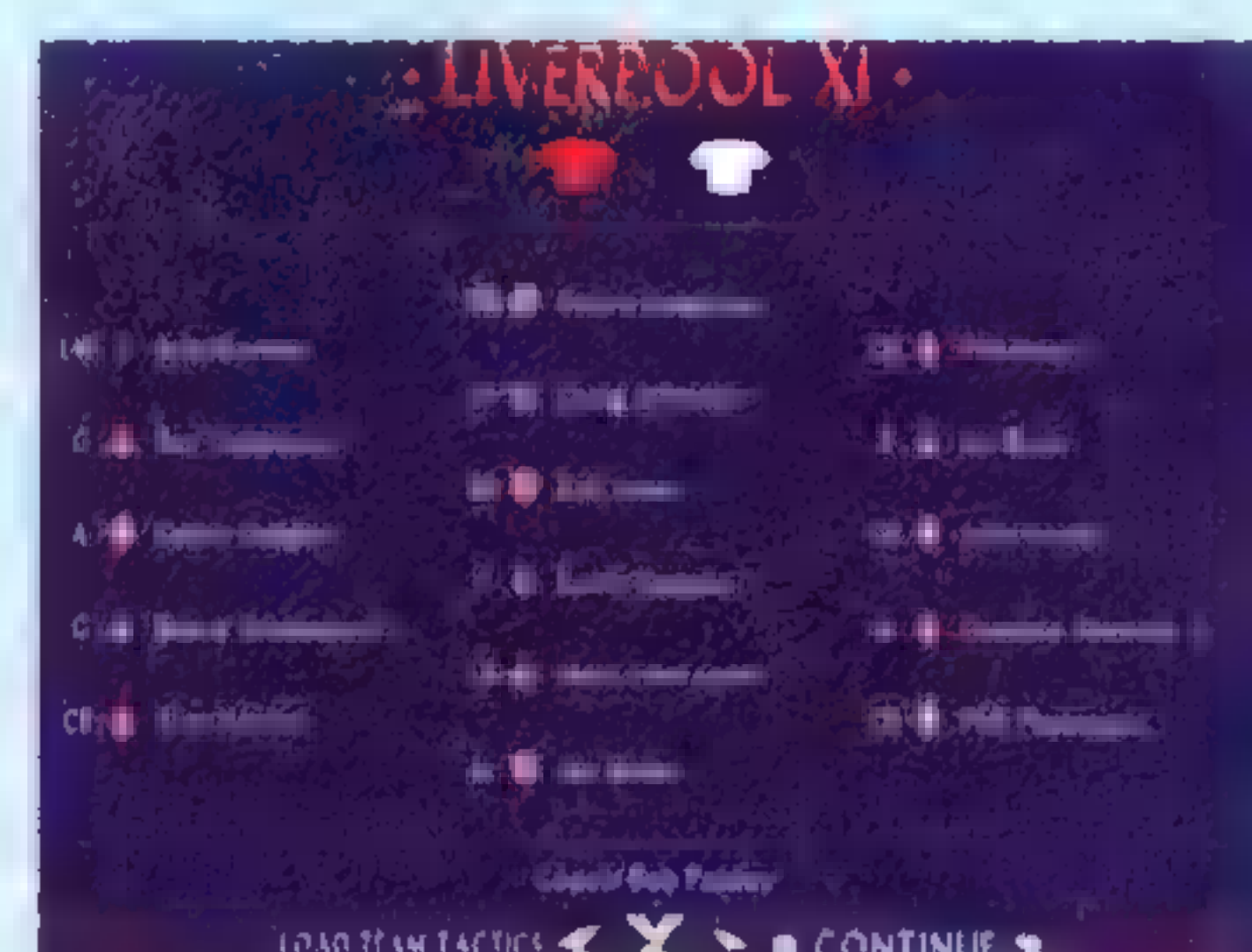
The *Sensible Soccer* trademark will already be familiar to anyone of a reasonable gaming heritage, but Jon envisages a bigger target market than those 'kickin' it old skool'.

"Obviously I hope that the old *SWOS* fans buy it, but I also hope people who maybe bought other football games will buy it because it will have all those pretty features that they want. It will also be more playable than previous versions. Maybe then they'll realise why *SWOS* had the little graphics for so long initially.

"I think that even when we're messing around with it now, it's not even halfway there and it's still pretty playable already.

So I'm sure we're going to get it more playable than any other PC football game."

Fighting talk indeed. If Jon Hare can walk it like he talks it, *Sensible Soccer 2000* could be the game the world is waiting for. Only time will tell.



Sensi's coming home

It's no secret that Jon Hare is the games industry's most frustrated musician, having served his time in a number of largely useless sub-heavy metal combos. Thanks to Hare's partnership with musical maestro Richard Joseph, the music in Sensible's

games is usually a cut above the aural crimes of most other companies. *SWOS* fans will already be familiar with the classic Goalscoringsuperstarhero, but *Sensi*



2000 features a brand new tune, an early mix of which *PC Zone* has been lucky enough to hear. With the requisite commentary voice-over, some impassioned lyrics and a rousing chorus built around the hackle-inducing

refrain of 'Football is our love...' it is an instant anthem, set to reverberate around virtual terraces for years to come. Your move, Skinner & Baddiel.

The image features two X-wing fighters from the Star Wars franchise. One is positioned in the upper right, angled towards the viewer, with its blue and white hull and red markings visible. The other is in the lower left, seen from a side-on perspective as it flies away, leaving a bright, multi-colored light trail behind it. The background is a dark, deep space filled with streaks of light, suggesting high-speed travel or a battle environment.

the most **destructive**
force in the universe...

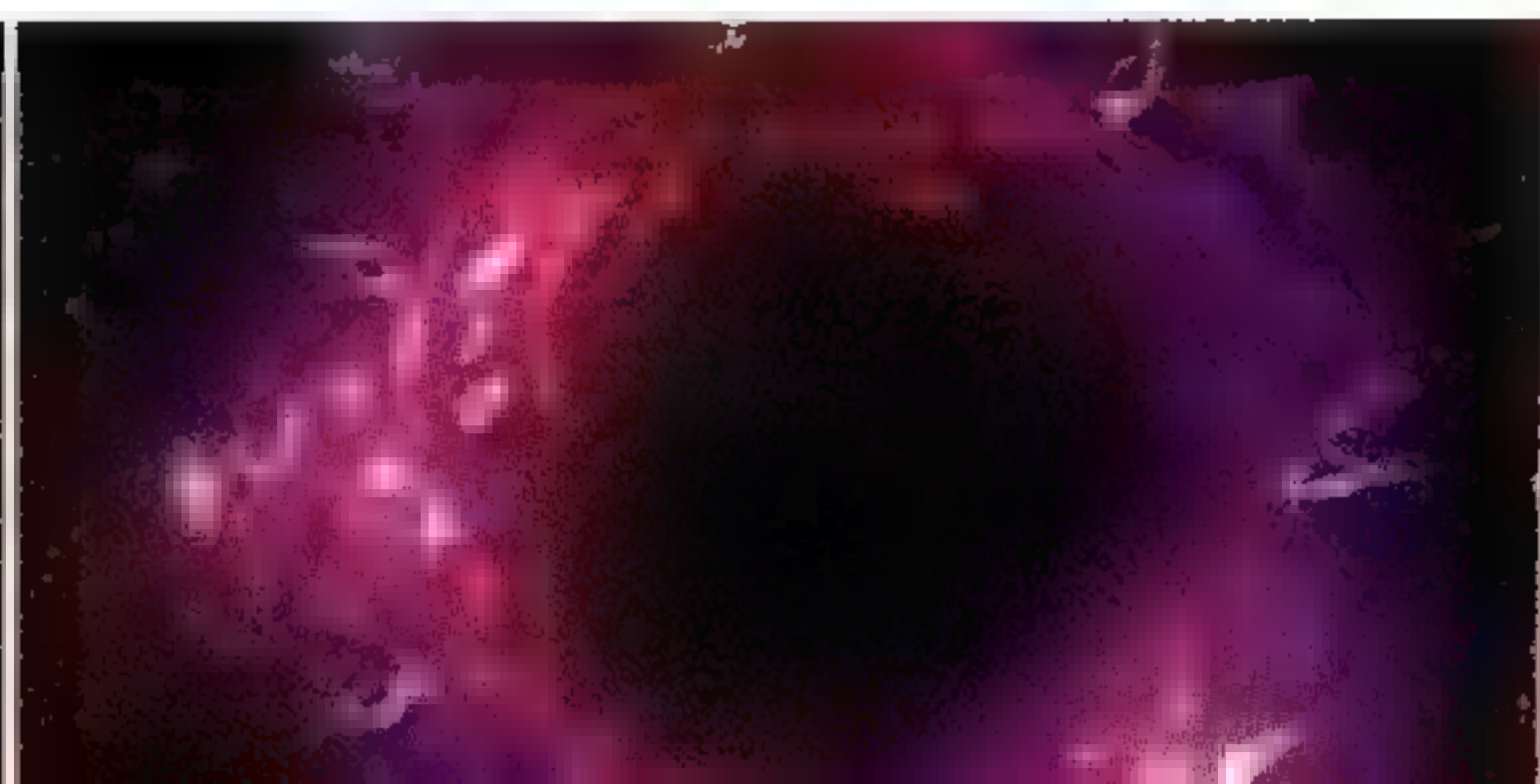
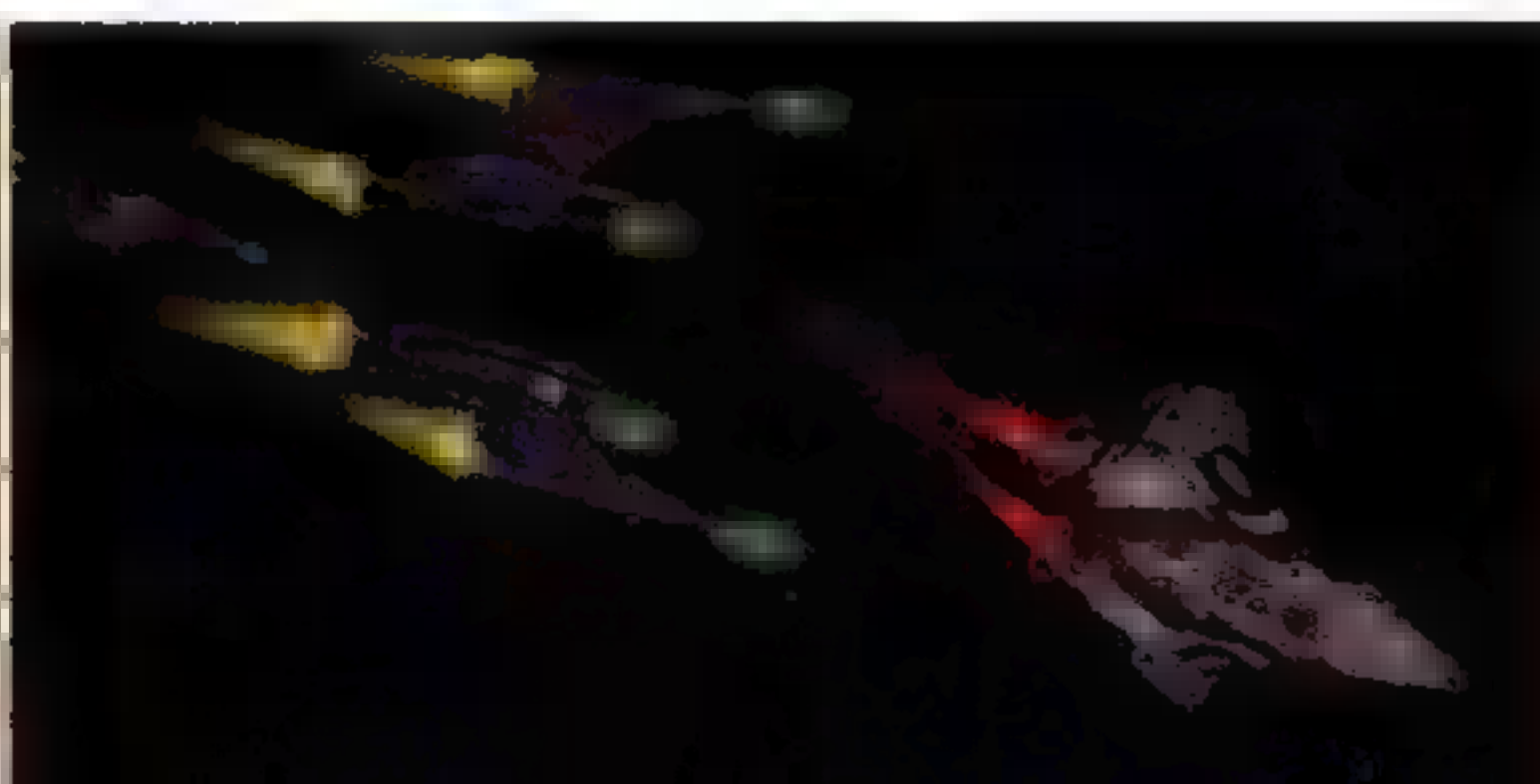


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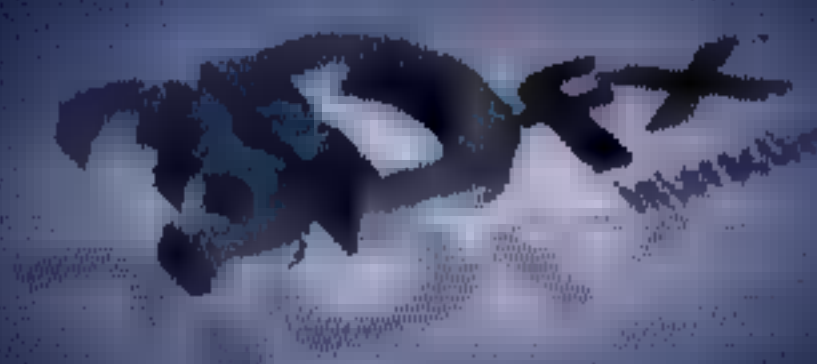
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HEDZ



VIS Interactive are proof that the Scottish games industry is alive and well. Athletic is a word rarely used to describe Steve Hill, so we sent him to Dunfermline. (Ouch.)

CONFIDENTLY EVADING MEDIA-FRIENDLY soundbites, HEDZ certainly takes some describing. Present and chatting are VIS Interactive's Chief Executive Officer, Christiaan van der Kuyl (a good Scottish name), and Vice-President Of Creative Development, Kirk Ewing. Chris explains how the game they're all calling Heads Exchange And Deploy Zone came about.

"Somebody phoned me up and said: 'Hasbro are looking to do loads of stuff, they've got loads of cash and so far all they've been doing is board game conversions. Why don't you come up with something for them?' We'd been bouncing around ideas of 'collectability' and things, kind of thinking what would be cool for them; they know the whole cult trading card thing, Magic cards, all the rest of it. Also, Kirk kept saying, 'Can we not get something really simple?', as simple as something like marbles or even the Pogs thing.

And we were kind of bouncing that idea round for about a week or so and then one day Kirk came in – we had a design meeting – and said, 'Right, I've got it!'"

Gentlemen's smoking club

What exactly Kirk had been smoking when he "got it" is uncertain, but Chris attempts to outline the background story of HEDZ. Take a deep breath...

"The basic concept of the game is that you play this little alien guy. Historically, these guys became so advanced and evolved so far that they ended up totally piss-bored with their lives because there was nothing for them to do. So this alien shoots off in a time-travelling spacecraft and ends up back at Earth. Having a good look around him, he thinks that the people seem quite weird and bizarre, so he walks up to one, whips its head off and sticks it on himself to find that he now possesses the powers of the head he's just captured.

"So he's whipping through time willy-nilly, taking them on and bringing them back to show off to his pals. The home planet government got a bit pissed off about this, stepped in and said: 'Right, we're going to put legislation in for this – tax it. You give us your whole collection of heads and we'll manufacture replicas of them all. It's going to be the national sport. We'll set it on the asteroid belt that surrounds the planet and we'll build little sort of theme parks based on sections of human culture. You can all take your heads in and go and knock shit out of each other.'"



(Left to right) Preliminary artwork of Cyclops. A famous surrealist artist. Early sketches of Soccer Player (can't think who that's based on). The waxy Icarus.



An irate looking headhunter, quite literally. Note Aircraft Carrier Head Man in the background.

Confused? You will be

"And the whole concept is 3D action combat. You go in, pick five heads out of the whole collection and those fighting against you have also got five heads. You can change heads at any moment you want, and the minute the health on one

"HEDZ revolves around the various skills of the 255 heads – each boasts both a normal and a special move."

of your heads drops to zero, the head pops off. You all run after the token that's bouncing about, and the first person to grab it and dunk it in the dunk zone keeps the head. So, if I knock a head from you, get it, grab it, dunk it – you've lost that head forever, and you've now only got four left to use

Product details

Developer: VIS Interactive

Publisher: Interplay

Website: www.hedz.com

Release Date: November

in this game. I've still got five plus I've got one deadhead that I've dunked and it's now back in my headcase. So basically the goal of the game is to knock heads off, then grab 'em and dunk 'em."

Medic!

Clearly, anyone outside the games industry caught spouting such nonsense would be immediately referred for psychiatric attention, but having played *HEDZ* it does actually make some kind of warped sense. Essentially, it revolves around the various skills of the available heads, of which there are 225 in total, each boasting both a normal move and a special move. For instance, Icarus can either fly upwards or throw hot wax at people. Likewise – and highly likely to prove very popular due to its revolting nature – Poodle Lady wields a pooper scooper which launches fresh turds, or alternatively she can release her yapping hounds.

Check your head

Many of the heads are thinly veiled caricatures of actual people, including a Groucho Marx, an Eric Cantona, Jimi Hendrix (replete with flaming guitar), Salvador Dalí, and Mohammed Ali, who naturally floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee, or an entire swarm of bees in this case. Some people could take offence at being portrayed in this way, but Kirk doesn't envisage any problems.

"The way we're working on the naming structure at the moment is to treat it as if it was a butterfly collection. They're pretty callous, the headchasers – they really don't give a fuck about coming down and decapitating live organisms. The way we'll probably end up doing it will just be a classification, so Mohammed Ali will be World Champion Boxer – it's going to be classified by what they are as opposed to who they are."

What they are is the product of some extremely warped minds. Just ask Aircraft Carrier Head, Easy Rider, Indian Chief, Violent Marsupial, '50s Rocker, General Patton, Berry the Greengrocer, or Monkey God...

Victory is sweet

VIS Interactive are based in a former maternity hospital in Dunfermline, and, sinisterly enough, one employee actually works in the room where he was born. Having previously been involved in multimedia, they've been developing games since

January 1996, and are now also working on

Earthworm Jim 3D for Interplay.

Chris explains how the move into games came about: "One day we just kind of woke up to ourselves and went 'This is absolutely pish, why are we doing this?' It was just pants, we just said 'Look, this is shite, we really want to be doing games, why aren't we doing games?' And

I then went out and put a team together that was going to be the games team to beat all games teams... unfortunately I had to settle for Kirk."

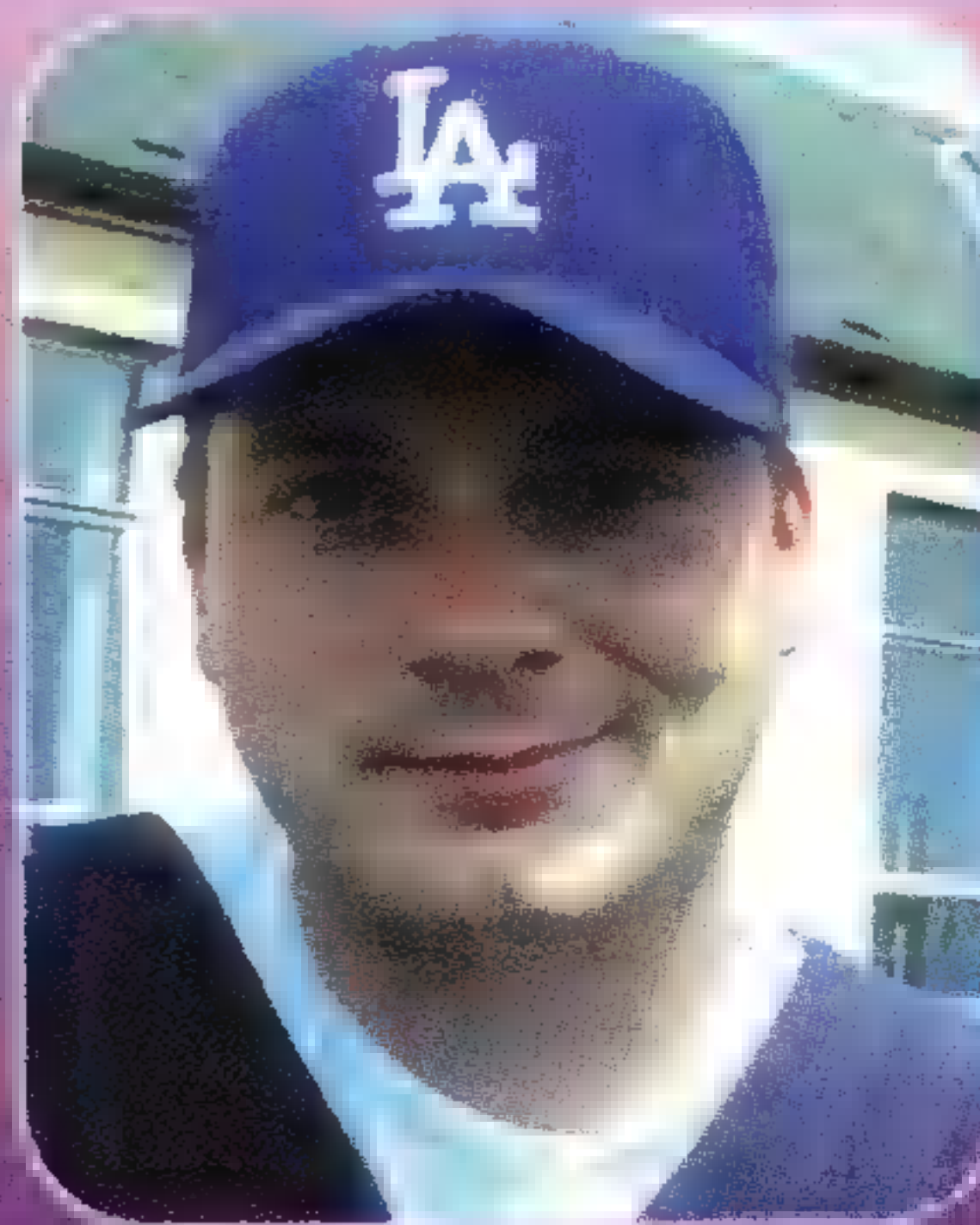
Readers may recognise Kirk from Channel 4's *GamesMaster*, particularly the episode in which

he wrestled the title of 'Games Animal' from the bandanna-wearing Dave Perry, a man who for some years appeared to be under the impression that the games industry was fancy dress, insisting on turning up as a pirate. The new Perry-free series is currently showing.

(Far left) Kirk 'hopalong' Ewing. Just say no, kids.

(Centre) That lot.

(Left) Chris van der Kuyt.



"He Was Always Such A Nice, Quiet Boy."



LIVE

What Went Wrong?



POSTAL

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F22

AIR DOMINANCE FIGHTER

Swift, silent and deadly. **Paul Presley** knew he shouldn't have drunk all that VirginRail coffee on the way to visit DID in Warrington.



IFE BEFORE 3DFX WAS A STRANGE TIME for flight sims. Before our lives became infested by lens flares, dubious fogging and texture-mapping that makes everything look like it's come straight out of a Habitat catalogue, there were very few good looking sims. There were quite a lot of light-sourced polygons and Gouraud shading, but not a great deal that people could actually say 'looked good'.

Apart from the games coming from one company. A company with a surprisingly low output quota, but with astonishingly high-quality products. Digital Image Design (DID) were responsible for some of the best looking pre-3Dfx simulations in the entire industry. Remember *EF2000*? 97 per cent? Thought you might.

So what does a team with that kind of reputation do, now the hardware has caught up with them? They push the envelope even further, that's what.

Not another F22?

F22 Air Dominance Fighter is the latest sim to come from the Warrington based specialists, and if you don't believe me when I say it looks absolutely stunning, then you obviously haven't looked at the screenshots on these pages. These are *in-game* shots. That's *in-game*. Not rendered. Not FMV. And rather astonishingly the game doesn't actually look like all the other 3Dfx games out there.

For obvious reasons I'm not going to dwell on the graphics. I could regale you with fps figures and hardware specifications, instead I'll let *F22*'s project manager, Nick Clarkson, answer a few questions. Starting with why they're simulating an aircraft that's already been featured in just about every other sim released this year.

"Obviously we do 3D combat simulations, and after *EF2000* we were looking for the next aircraft to do. We didn't wait



"It's possible to run battles yourself from the AWACS, and issue commands while chomping on large cigars"

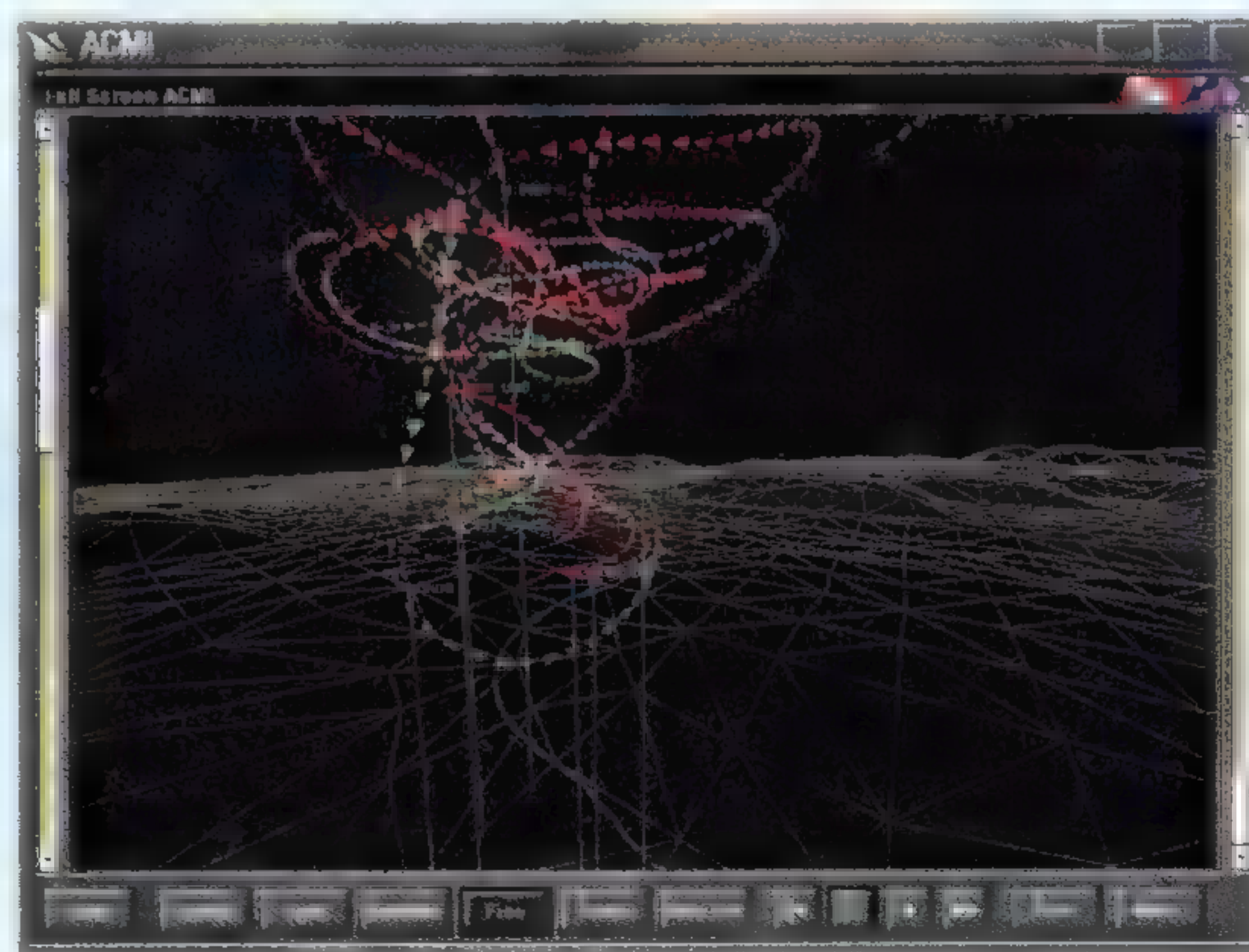
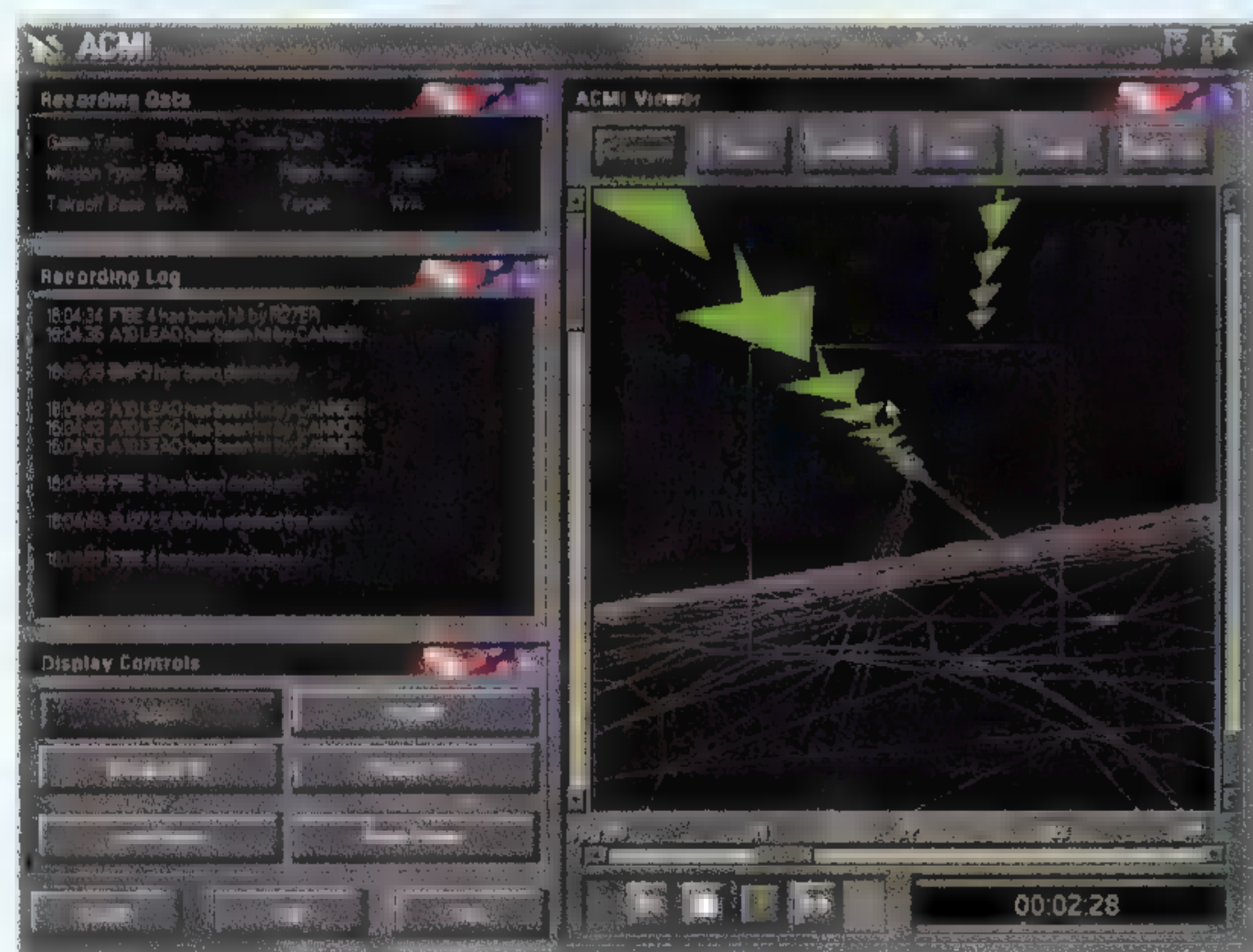
until everyone else had decided to do an *F22* sim, we were planning ours while *EF2000* was still in the pipeline. So we were always going to do the *F22*, which was great for our American colleagues because they were always a little bit sceptical about the 'EuroFighter'. We were actually going to call *EF2000* 'EuroFighter 2000', but as soon as the Americans hear the word 'Euro' they switch off. So instead we thought we'd con them a bit and call it '*EF*', and they fell for it."

A game of two halves

F22 is actually two games in one. Or rather two games in two. Nick explains: "Whereas with *EF2000* you had a campaign in there from the start, with *F22* we've split the



(Above) Martin, Nick and Gordon. Martin's the extremely tall Jimmy Nail lookalike by the way. (Left) ACMI or Air Combat Manoeuvring, er, Interface (probably) allows pilots to comprehensively analyse their missions using a bewildering screen full of arrows and wireframe landscapes. The view can be adjusted as you see fit though, even including a first-person angle.





(Left) The cockpit is fully 'virtual' (meaning you can scroll around at will) and remains constantly active at all time. The standard view has been elevated to give that realistic 'panoramic' viewpoint.

product into two sections. There's *Air Dominance Fighter*, which isn't going to have a full campaign in it. Then three months down the line, round about the beginning of March, we'll introduce *F22 Total Air War* which will be like a plug-in of a full campaign."

Isn't that a bit cynical? Essentially charging twice for one game? "We looked at development time and costs and realised that if we wanted to put it all in the one package, we certainly wouldn't make Christmas," explains Nick. "So yes, Christmas for us is good for the sales, but Christmas for the user is also good, because they all want to play the next DID flight sim as soon as possible."

What sort of audience are you going for? "We looked at the logistics of it and decided that a lot of the feedback we got indicated that there are two different types of people. There's the die-hard flight sim nut who will play it to death and want a campaign. Then the average Joe might find that the full campaign is too intense or intimidating to start with and might not want to get into that. So what we've done is present the user with an *F22* with all the training missions that were in *EF* plus a whole lot more, and a load of 'canned' missions. There's a company called SimTek that produce a magazine called *Enemy Lock On* which is a really heavy duty flight sim mag. They're actually going to do the canned missions for us, so they'll be detailed and a lot of fun."

First day at school

"The Simulator option is where we're expecting most people to start off," says Nick, taking me through the different areas of the game. "At first I found *EF2000* daunting," he recalls, "but now it's so simple compared to this. This does my head in. But slowly and surely, by doing all these missions I'll be able to suss out what's going on."

He brings up the training screen, which is divided into different areas of combat aircraft operations, each with a comprehensive list of individual training scenarios. "You progress through these bit by bit, and eventually you learn all about the different weapons systems and the flight systems of the aircraft, going from the really easy takeoffs and landing, er..." Nick falters slightly as the monitor is adorned with large red 'Failure' labels, showing that he's failed to complete both of these areas. "Anyway, it goes from there to more advanced areas, such as dealing with hydraulic failures, engine failures, electrical problems and mid-air refuelling, which I find impossible." I decided not to point out that he couldn't seem to take off properly either.

"Then there are the wingmen. You learn how to interact with proper intelligent wingmen. They're not going to do everything you say, you know. 'Fly into that hill!' 'Yes sir!', that sort of thing. They are pretty smart and will engage bandits and so on. If you were playing multi-player, I could be your wingman and you could issue me commands that I probably wouldn't follow either." Like flying into that hill? "Actually I probably *would* end up doing that..."

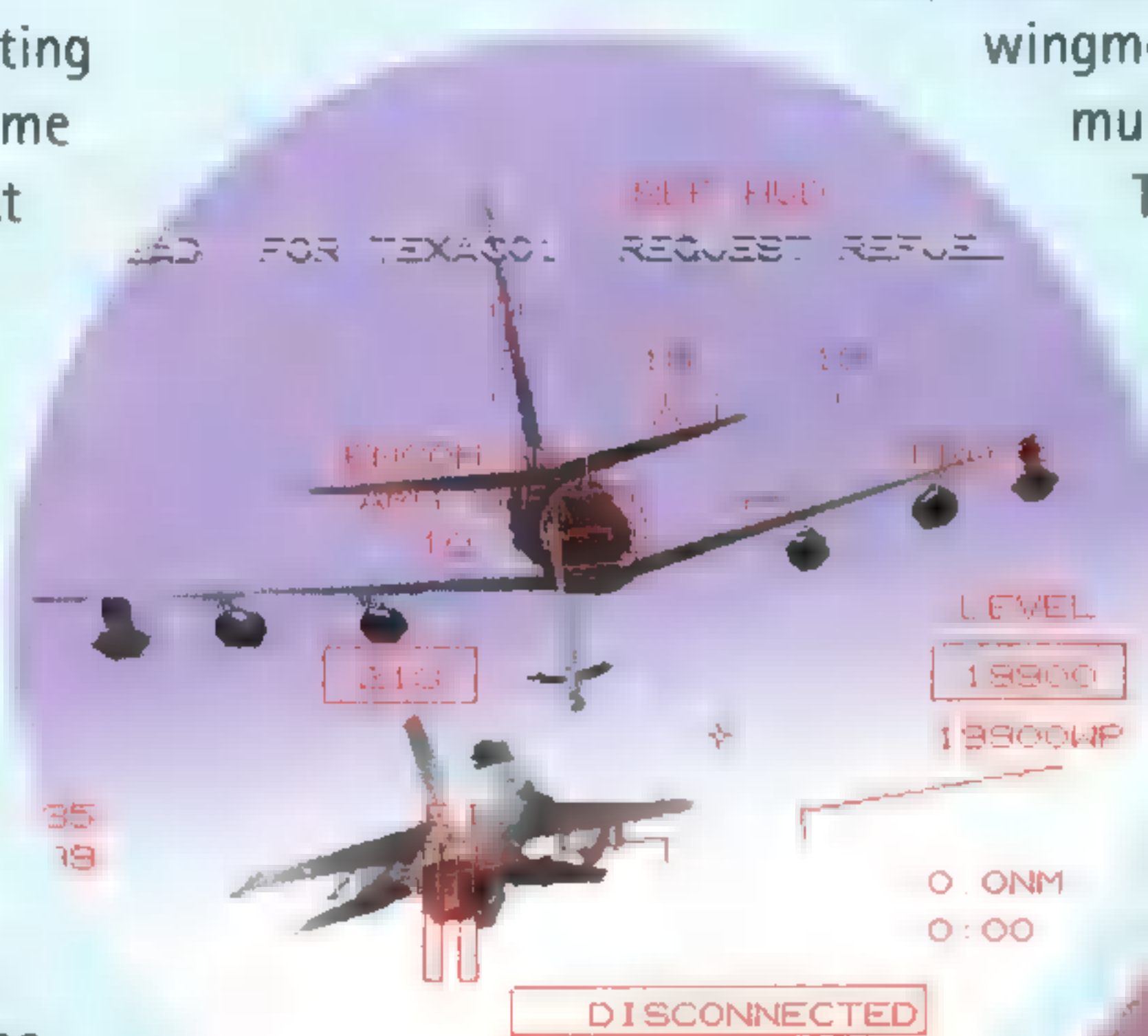
Eye in the sky

There's another side to *F22 ADF*, a side that adds a whole new level to the game. Nick clicks on a button marked AWACS, and a screen that looks worryingly like the million and one resource-management clones appears. "Not only can you sit in the cockpit of the *F22*, but at any stage in the game you can go from the *F22* into the seat of the AWACS aircraft, get an overview of the battle and then jump into the seat of any of the *F22*s that are in the area." It's possible to actually run the whole battle yourself from the AWACS, and issue commands to different pilots, while chomping on large cigars. "There's a mission where there are a number of aircraft on the map. Blue ones are mine, red ones are the enemy and orange ones we have no idea about. I can send aircraft to intercept and get a visual identity." The impression I get is a sort of aerial *Command & Conquer*, albeit simplified. "It will come into its own when the campaign package is launched. But certainly it's a handy thing to have in the canned missions, to jump into the AWACS and see what's going on around you and plan your strategy accordingly."

Don't stop now

Naturally there is a hell of a lot more to *F22* but the majority of it is pretty much what you're getting in most other flight sims at the moment, (or at least what most other flight sims promise.) Real-world campaigns that are constantly evolving, fully detailed and accurately with modelled, full wingmen options, all the networking and multi-player support you could ask for.

The reality of these claims is usually different, but from what I've played of *F22* so far, it doesn't look like DID are making any false promises here. And it looks gorgeous.



(Above) The ground terrain is amongst some of the most detailed we've ever seen and unlike some other sims, it doesn't lose any detail when you fly lower down.

Product details

Developer: Digital Image Design

Publisher: Ocean Software

Website: www.did.com

Release Date: ADF in December, TAW in March

(Below) All aspects of air-to-air life is in the game, including that most feared of all operations - mid-air refuelling.





Q

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A

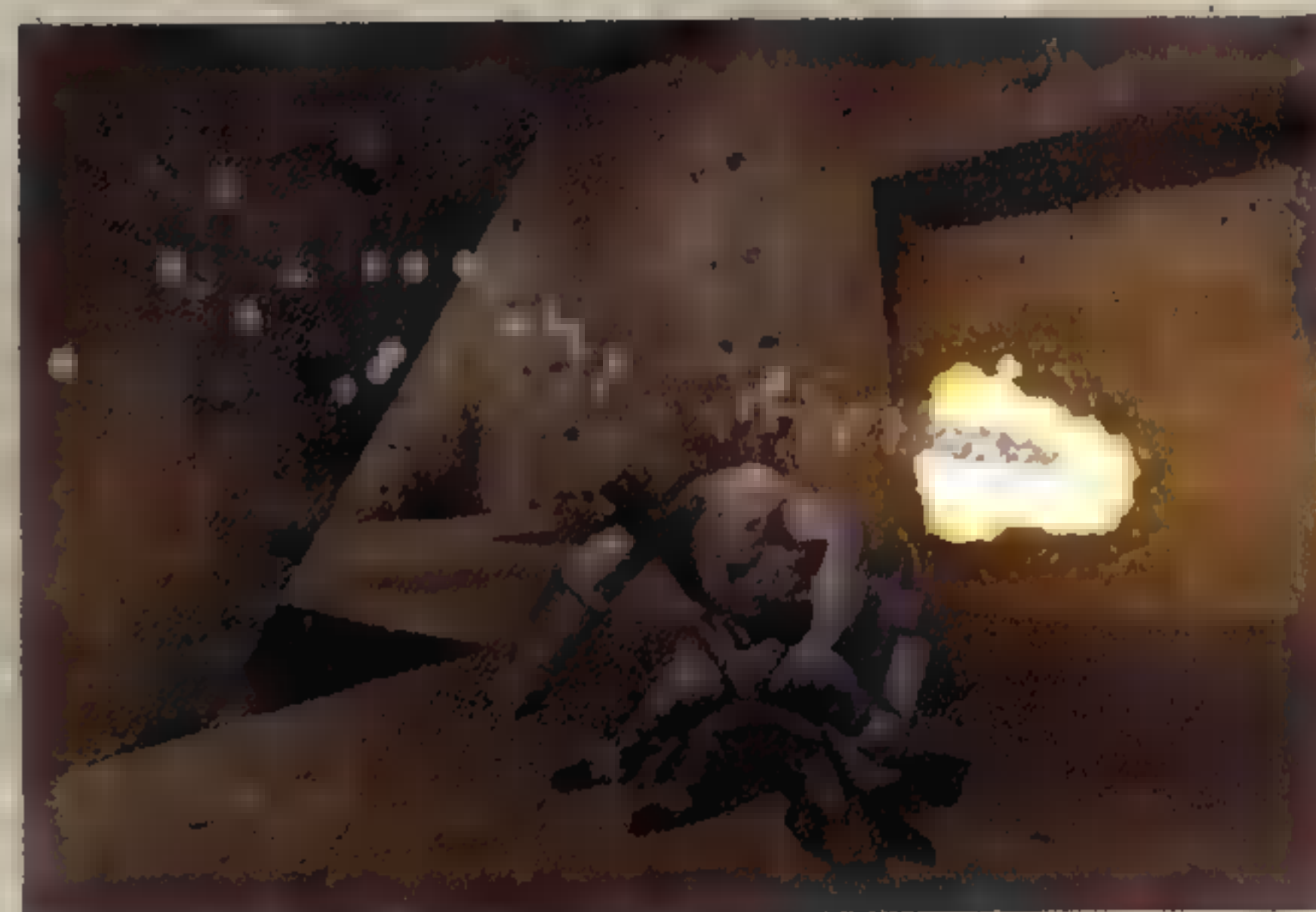
K

E

II

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Handles like a *(wet)* dream.



GRAND THEFT AUTO
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How much pleasure can a man get from driving?

Very little, when his car's been stolen. But then that's your job - you're a car thief working on behalf of the Mafia.

Of course, stealing cars and shooting people creates innocent victims.

Anyway, if the temperamental sports car stolen from this advertisement is not your cup of tea,

Grand Theft Auto offers you over 30 different vehicles to steal, each with its own handling characteristics,

including buses, garbage trucks and motorbikes.

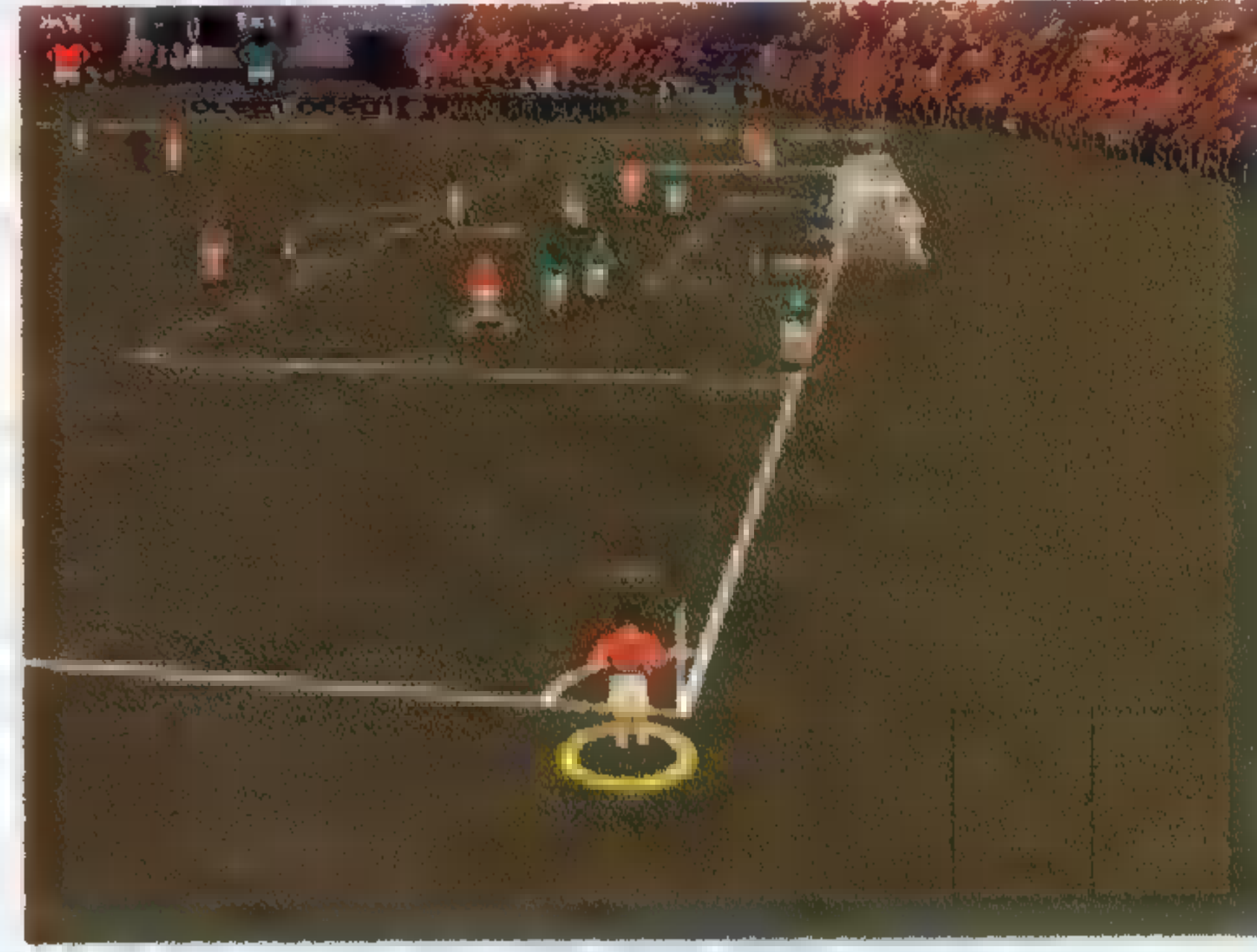
In headrush-inducing top-down perspective you race through three different cities,

each with its own massive and unique road system and local landmarks.

Your Mafia bosses will require you to commit numerous tasks along the way.

But for this much adrenaline, it's criminal not to.





MATCHDAY 3

Ten years after the last *Match Day*, **Steve Hill** is 'kickin' it old skool.'

W

HEN IT COMES TO FOOTBALL GAMES, Jon Ritman should know what he's talking about. Having virtually pioneered the genre back in the

Eighties, he sees

Matchday 3 as a backlash against the numerous shallow graphical showpieces that are currently flooding the market.

PC Zone: So, why are most football games skid?

Jon Ritman: "Football came in during the Eighties when people started copying arcade games. Arcade games had been specially set up so that you were very, very good the instant you started playing - otherwise you wouldn't put another 10p in the slot. As a result you were instantly doing overhead kicks, scoring great goals, everything - which meant there was very little depth because there weren't that many more things to learn how to do. That made it very easy to pick up, but gave you no long term play. Some of the things they did to make it easy to pick up was introduce things like the pass button and the shoot button."

This Is The Modern World

PCZ: Clearly, this trend has continued today, with few

exceptions, as Ritman acknowledges.

JR: "Barring Jon Hare [of Sensible Software], everybody else has gone for the pass and shoot. That's okay if you're putting 10p in and want it to be easy, but when you've paid forty quid you want a bit of a game in there, you want some learning curve. You want to know that when you've been playing it for two months every night of the week, you can smash your friend down the road who's only been playing it for two days. Otherwise you haven't learnt anything. And there was nothing to learn."

How do you ride a horse?

PCZ: Harsh words, but Ritman believes *Cranberry Source* have got the right approach.

JR: "What we are doing in *Matchday 3* is to go back to the



"I don't want to get my knees cold, or wet, or damaged - I just like to to smash the opponent".



idea of having kick buttons instead of shoot and pass. Now, if you want to pass the ball, well, face one of your players and kick the ball - that's the way football normally works. The same applies to the goal. This makes a big difference in terms of gameplay. First of all, with the goal, you can place the ball precisely where you want to place it - hopefully a long way from the goalkeeper." ▶



(Above) The panned out view enables you to see who to pass to. Which is always nice. (Above centre) The replay gives you the opportunity to humiliate your opponent from a variety of angles. (Above right) "Stop the game everyone and help me find my contact lens."



(Left) The interface is simplicity itself, with all the options confined to one screen. (Below) That'll be a penalty then.



Complete Control

PCZ: Without automatic passing, different skills will be needed to master Matchday 3.



JR: "There's a lot of gameplay in there about picking up a ball cleanly; if a ball is bouncing at waist height it's very hard to get under control, you can only really do it when it's sort of below the knees. So it's about running onto the ball at the right stage of the bounce, which in turn is about placing both the length of the ball and the position of the ball. That makes the whole process of passing a skill activity. This whole structure makes a big

difference to scoring goals. For instance, you run in close to the goal from one side, and the goalkeeper has to come out to narrow the angle. Because you have total

control over who you're passing to and where you're passing, you can just kick it straight across the face of the goal and somebody running in from the other corner has got an open goal. That's how the game of football should be played."

You what?

PCZ: Surprisingly, Jon Ritman is not a big fan of the beautiful game.

JR: "I personally hate football as a game. I would never go and see a football game, and I don't watch it on telly, but I love playing football games. I don't want to get my knees cold, or wet, or damaged - I just like to play the game; I like to smash the opponent."

Matchday 3 should be testing your manual dexterity very soon, whether you like football or not. Incidentally, if you don't like football, you're wrong.

Product details

Developer: Cranberry Source
Publisher: Ocean
Website: www.ocean.co.uk
Release Date: November



(Above) Cranberry Source have bottled out from using real player names, changing the initial. Hence Terry Overmars.

A kick up the eighties

The Eighties are roundly dismissed as the decade that taste forgot. In this cynical age it is now hard to believe that there was once was a time when Spitting Image was considered anarchic, Modern Romance managed to eke out a living, and people named their dogs Rambo. In the midst of this madness came the advent of home computing, with Clive Sinclair's ZX Spectrum leading the way - available in 16K for paupers, or a whacking 48K for "posh twats." In 1983, a game appeared that was to shape a generation: Jon Ritman's *Match Day*, its trimphone bastardisation of the Match Of The Day theme providing an apologetic soundtrack to the teatime smell of the estate. At the time it seemed it couldn't get any better, although four years later it did, with *Matchday 2* boasting 'real physics,' as well as players with immense 'George Berry' afros.

Both games also surfaced on the Commodore 64, a machine generally owned by kids whose parents refused to remove the plastic covering from the back seat of their Allegro. But for any self-respecting confused adolescent, the Spectrum was King, and rubbery keyboards ruled. Chafed elbows and a cricked neck were

an endurable side effect from being far too close to the telly (inevitably an Hitachi with teak veneer), and homework took a back seat as primitive leagues and cups were tenaciously contested. Additionally, the two player game provided an outlet for sibling rivalry to be vented in a non-aggressive manner, although the limited dimensions of the Speccy keyboard could easily lead to unpleasant finger-touching, often

escalating into ugly, wanton violence. The original *Match Day* games were genuine classics from an era before the industry became a giant corporate rollercoaster, with the emphasis placed firmly on originality over ostentatiousness, and gameplay over graphics. Having said that, hunt them down on a Spectrum emulator now and you'll discover that they were actually a pile of shit.



(Above) The original Matchdays gave you the 'privilege' of having a kickaround on a blue pitch.

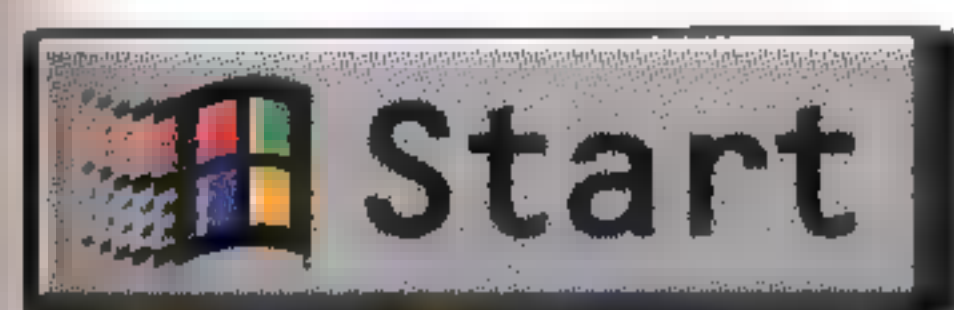
Your back's against the wall,

Your butt's
getting burned,

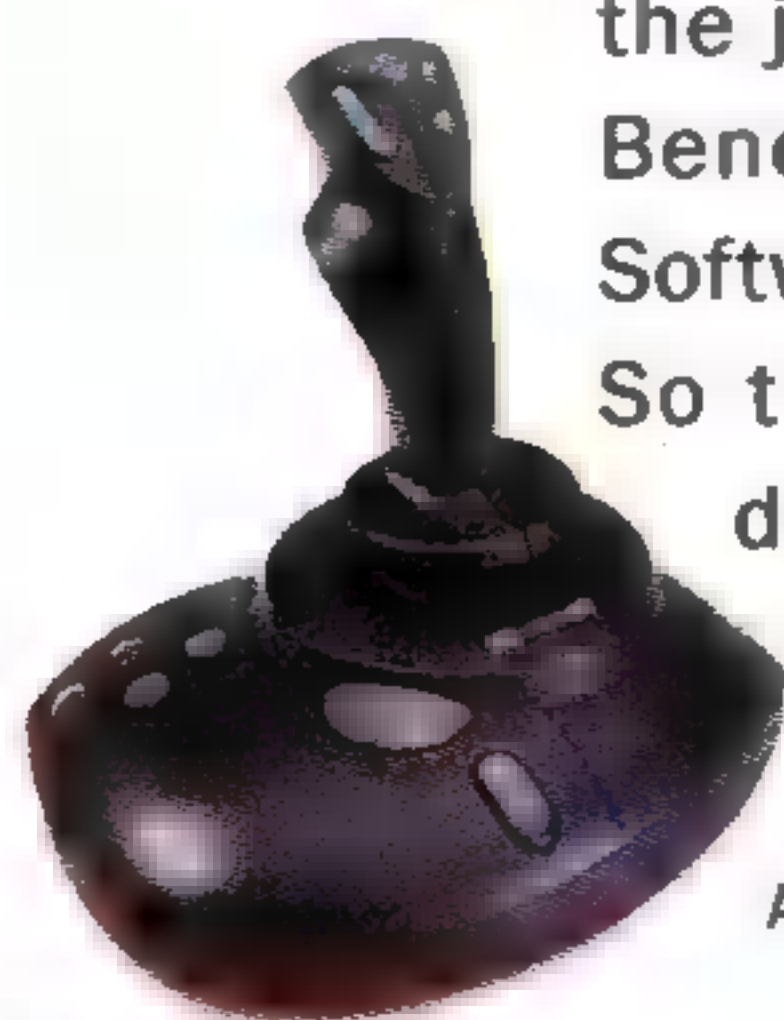
the chips
are down

and you're almost
out of metaphors.

Don't you wish you had a
Faster joystick?



SIDEWINDER



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Review ZONE

This month

Despite what you might think, it's now okay to play computer games in the eyes of the media. Two years ago if you admitted you played games you were a nerd. Now you're all hip, Diesel-wearing dudes. Congratulations!

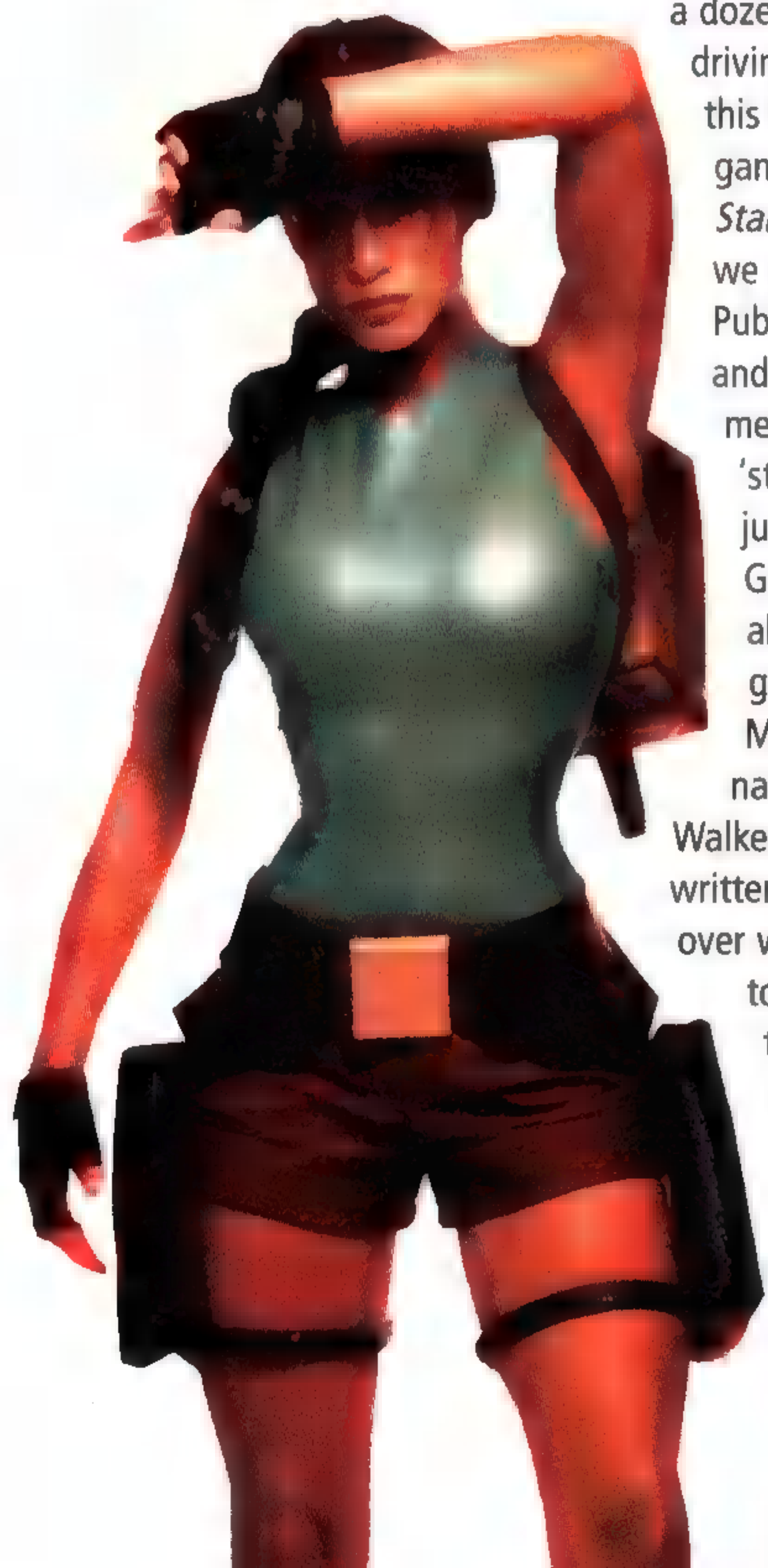


WE'VE GOT A LOT TO THANK CORE DESIGN FOR. NOT ONLY HAVE THEY GIVEN US LARA CROFT and a fantastic sequel to a fantastic game, but they've gone a long way towards making computer games appear 'cool' and 'fun' in the eyes of the media.

Those of us who play games as a regular pastime know this. It's just that, until just over a year ago, if you played computer games you kept it to yourself. However, the arrival of the PlayStation and games such as *Tomb Raider*, *WipeOut* and *Mario* on the Nintendo 64 saw people's attitudes to games and their players evolve from being speccy, greasy, sexually-frustrated adolescents to hip, club-going, Diesel-wearing dudes who also read *The Face*, *FHM* and *Fast Car* magazine. Of course, neither image is particularly accurate, but at least this new consciousness allows you to discuss the mission structure of *C&C: Red Alert* in the pub without fear of derision and a punch in the throat.

So why have computer games suddenly become 'kewl'? Well, it's got a lot to do with the demographic. Teenagers who were the first generation to play computer games at home on their Spectrums, Commodore 64s and BBC Micros are now in their late twenties and early thirties. They've grown up with computer games and have played them all their adolescent lives, be it on Clacton Pier or in their bedrooms, huddled over their Acorn Electron. The average age of our reader is 29 years old. He likes football, fast cars, lager and Oasis. He's what the media have labelled the 'lad'. Oh yeah, and he swears too. It's no great coincidence that the games industry has pandered to his likings. This month we've previewed two footie games and reviewed another. There are around another half

a dozen more due for release before Christmas. There are loads of driving games around too. We reviewed the excellent *Screamer Rally* this month, and *Rally 4* last month, and there are a whole host of F1 games due for release very soon. It's now socially acceptable to like *Star Wars* (note the same demographic) and even *Star Trek* - hence we are seeing more and more games that use these licenses. Publishers are using celebs and sports 'stars' to promote their games, and as a result they've become more acceptable in the eyes of the media. Edios recently spent an estimated £30k on a press meet 'starring' Dennis Wise, Tony Adams and Jamie Rednapp (to name just three) to promote *CM97/98*. Jo Guest appeared in *that* ad for Gametek. Alan Shearer is promoting *Actua Soccer 2*. Queen are about to star in their own adventure game. Stephen Spielberg is getting involved in games. So is Bruce Willis. Games have been Mark Hamill's bread and butter for the last few years. Serious, big name actors such as John Hurt, Malcolm MacDowell and Christopher Walken have all appeared in games. Lara Croft is set to release a single written and produced by Dave Stewart. There's more and more cross-over with the music and film industry than ever before - it's now 'okay' to like games, let alone play them. We've got a model on our cover this month (and we had two last month). People are finally accepting that playing games is a socially acceptable past time - thank God. So give yourselves a slap on the back. You've helped to make games 'okay'. **Z**



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Scoring system

90+ CLASSIC



The highest accolade a game can attain. Not only is it innovative and highly original, but it's extremely playable and has masses of long-term appeal. Games that receive the 'Classic' award should be seen as a benchmark with which to compare other games of the same genre.

80-89 RECOMMENDED



An excellent game that simply lacks that certain something to make it a gaming classic. It may not be necessarily highly original, but it contains some new ideas and variations that add to the genre that are well implemented. Well worth checking out.

70-79

If a game scores within this bracket it's good, but not good enough to be recommended. It's not exactly original and somebody's probably done it better already, but it's still playable all the same. Basically, it's worth shelling out for, especially if you're a big fan of the genre, but don't expect anything innovative. Whatever you do, don't discount games just because they don't quite hit the recommended mark!

50-69

Games that fall into this bracket are distinctly average and don't really offer anything new. There's nothing much wrong with these titles, but then there's nothing much to recommend them either. They're just average. Okay. Not bad. Alright. We've seen it all before. A lot better on budget. You get the picture.

40-49

Okay, so you're not really going to buy this, are you? We'd advise you not to. It's below average, it's not very playable, you'll probably be disappointed. It had a few nice ideas, but they were badly executed. Give it a miss.

21-39

Oh dear. This should never have got past the ideas stage. It offers absolutely nothing new to the genre, is very limited in terms of gameplay, frustrating to play and ultimately a complete waste of money. Avoid disappointment. Avoid this game.

20 AND BELOW PANTS



Absolutely bloody awful. Unplayable, due to bad design or bugged code. Crap with a capital 'C'. Naff with a capital 'N'. Do not buy this game, it will ruin your life and all those who come into contact with it. It doesn't get much worse than this. Have we made ourselves clear?

The Perspective

This is designed as a purely visual guide to how games of a similar style compare. The bars do not relate to previous review scores... they are simply an indication of how the reviewer feels about the products on a sliding scale.

Game 1

Game 2

THE BENCHMARK PC

At PC Zone all games are played and tested on a DAN Technology Pentium 133 with 16Mb RAM, a 2Mb graphics card and a quad-speed CD-ROM drive. We also use Maxi Gamer 3Dfx cards for releases that support D3D and 3Dfx specific games.



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LISTEN UP!

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Available



3DBLASTER
Native Version
Available



3DFX
Native Version
Available



DIAMOND STEALTH
Native Version
Available



MATROX MYSTIQUE
Native Version
Available



POWERVR
Native Version
Available



The software is
designed to take
advantage of **D3D**



The software is
designed to take
advantage of **MMX**



This software will
only run under
WINDOWS 95



The software may
run slowly, especially
in hi-res mode



The software
supports **MICROSOFT
DIRECT INPUT**



The software
supports **MICROSOFT
NETWORK PLAY**



The software
supports
INTERNET PLAY



The software will
run acceptably on a
486DX2/66

THANKS THIS ISSUE TO:

Spike ■ Tufty - as always...
Susie @ Core Design
Paul Presley - for being here
Paul Fox @ GT Interactive
Lidia @ Eidos - for the munchies
Dave Perry @ Shiny
Everyone @ DiD
Saul @ Anco

Cool games

We see hundreds of games over the months but there are a few that we hang on to and continue to play at lunch-time/when we're supposed to be doing more important stuff...



Tomb Raider 2
◀ **NHL 98**
Jedi Knight: Dark Forces II
Championship Manager 97/98
You Don't Know Jack

Crap games

There are some games that you can leave in the middle of the room with a big sign next to them saying "Please steal me" and you still can't get rid of the bloody things...



Sonic 3D: Flickies Island
◀ **Betrayal In Antara**
Speedboat Attack
Man O War
Corporate Warrior



actual screenshots



IF YOU CAN KEEP YOUR TROOPS OTHERS ARE LOSING YOU'VE PROBABLY ONLY BE

The environment of Myth: The Fallen Lords is so real that every bloody limb, every scattered sword, every unexploded charge tossed by a ground-rippling explosion remains a live element ready to be seized and used by or against you.

Not limited to a simple overhead view, you'll rotate around the heads of your troops, follow the arc of a burning arrow and zoom in on the slaughter.

Get an eyeful of stunning detail: reflections in the water, lightning frying the enemy to cinders, smoking craters ringed with the heads of the inept and every ounce of blood remaining on the scarred battlefield.

But don't stare too long. Learn the art of war and the importance of physics as you move fast to seize the high ground where the archers have greater range and pyromaniac dwarves can shower targets with explosives.



YOUR HEAD WHILE ALL
SING THEIR...

I PLAYING FOR 5 SECONDS.

Multiplayer games include classic scenarios like King of the Hill and Capture the Flag, and uniquely challenging variants like Assassin and Steal the Bacon, even in teams!

You can even play over the Internet using bungle.net or turn your local network into your own personal warzone.

So while you've got a head, use it - get your hands on Myth now.



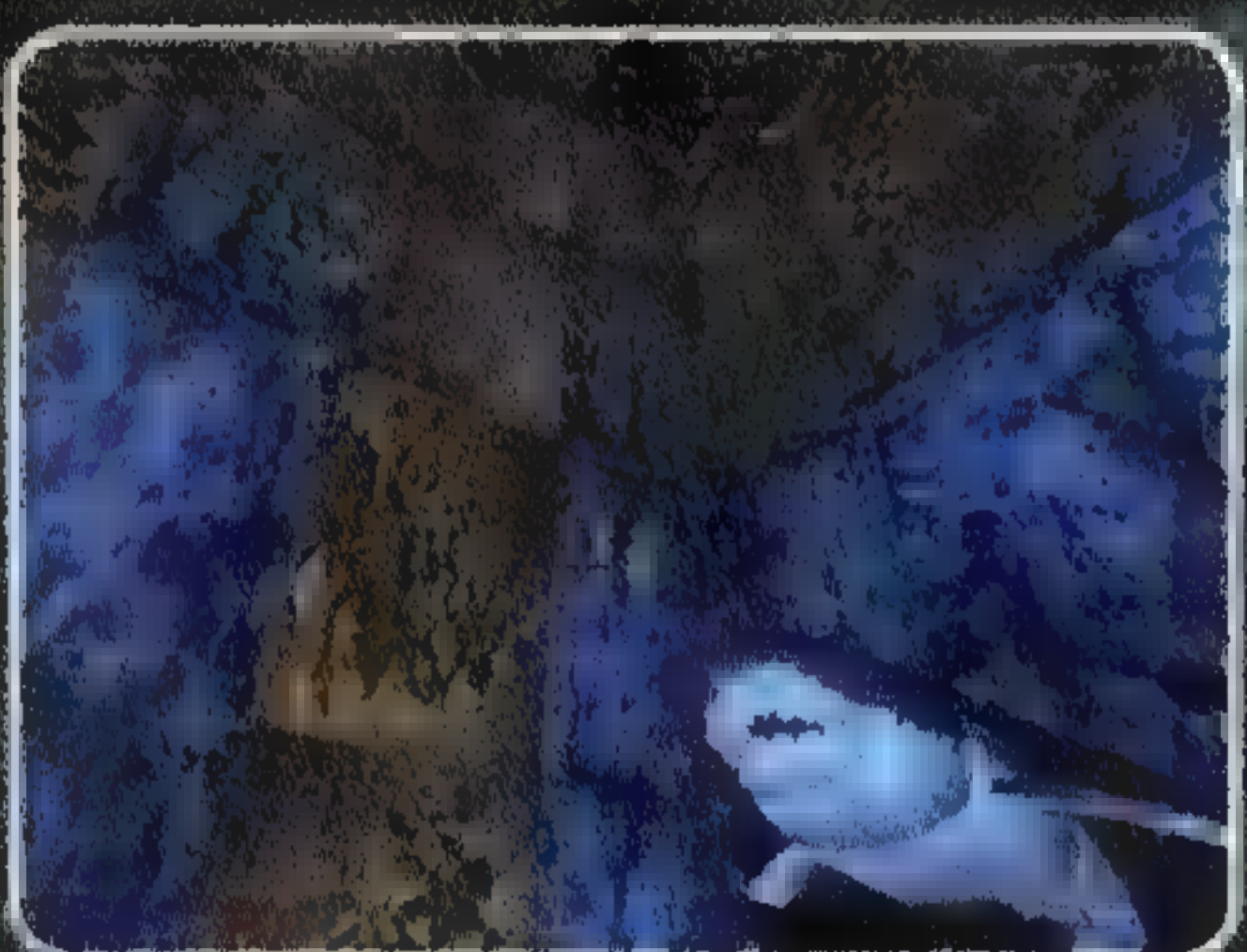
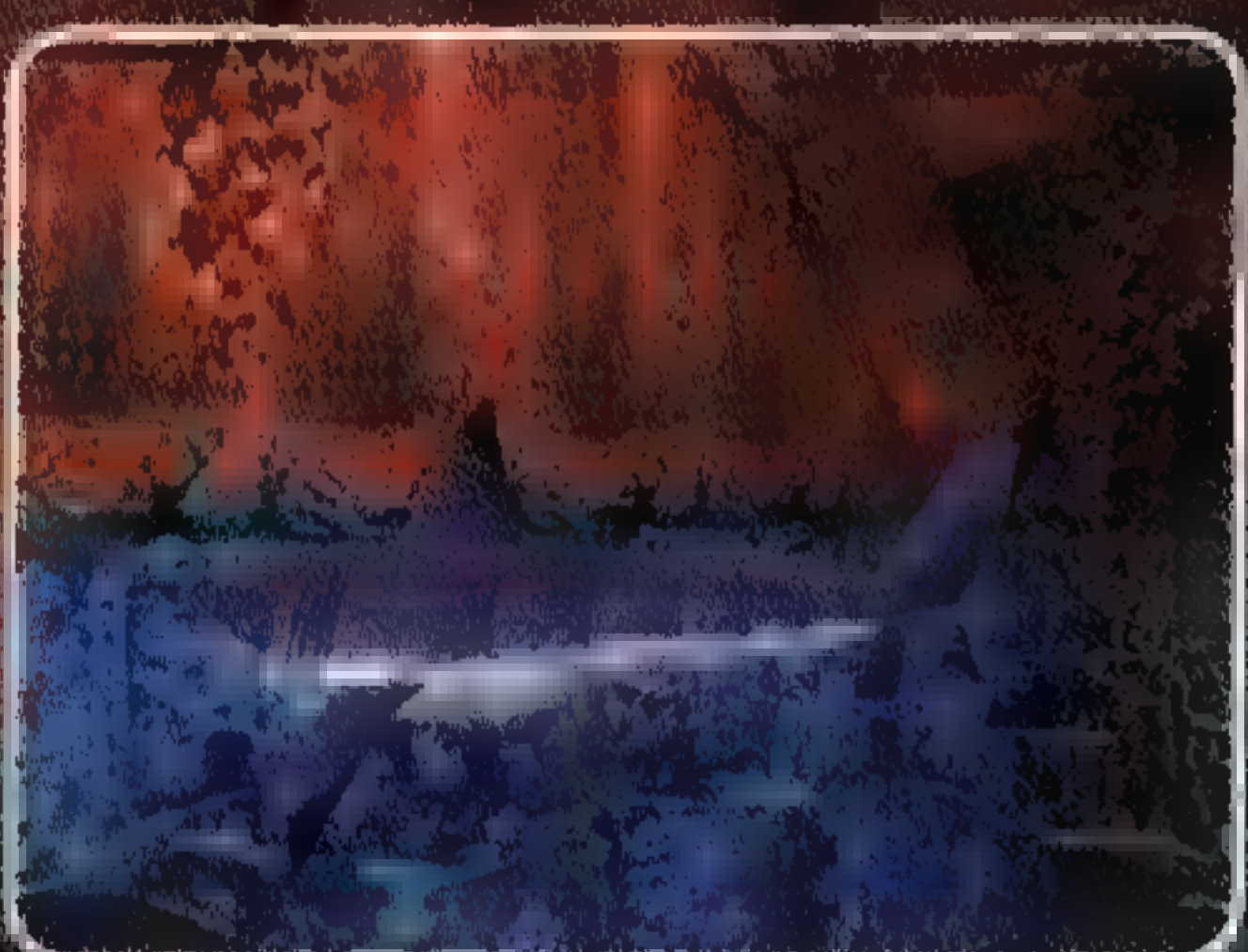
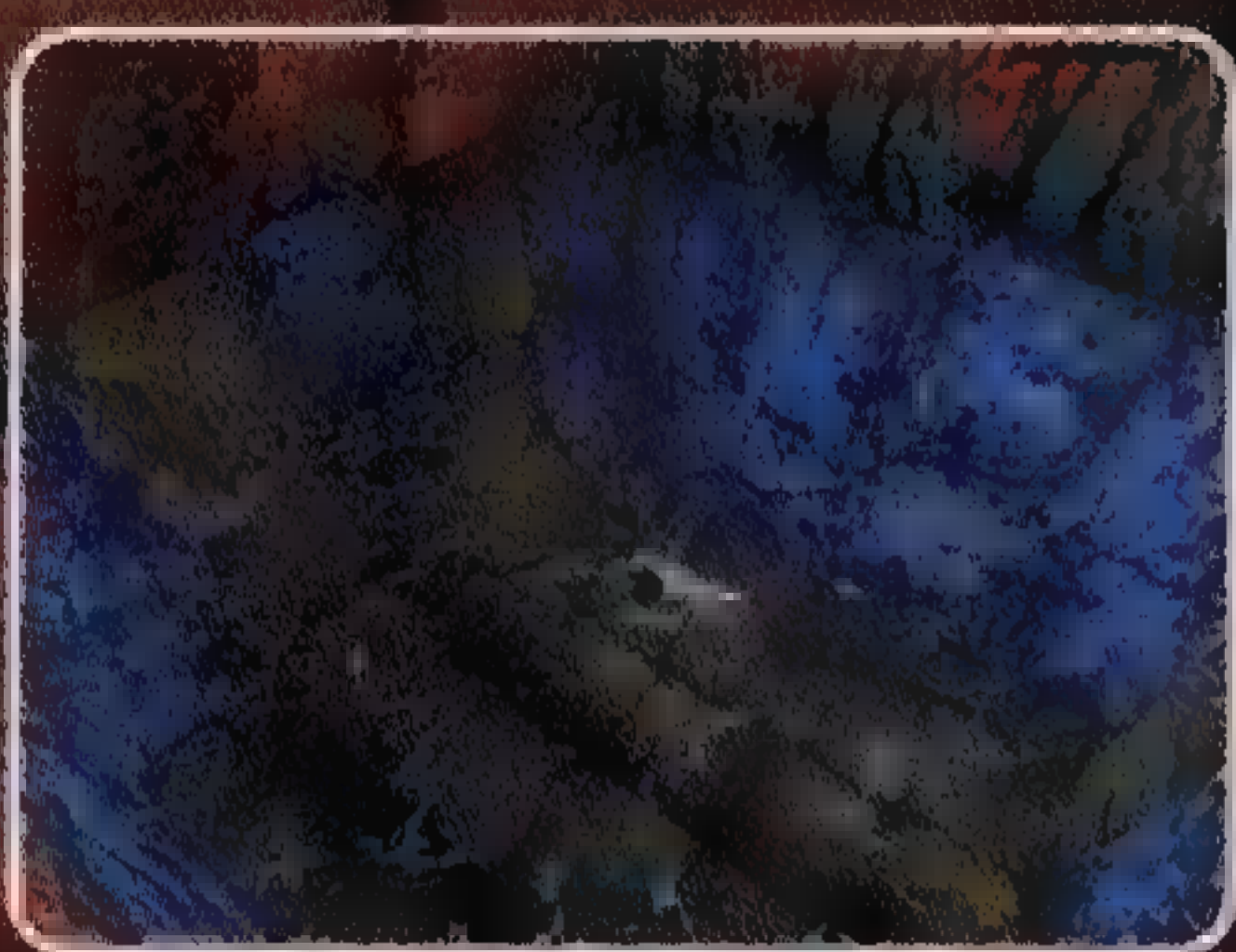
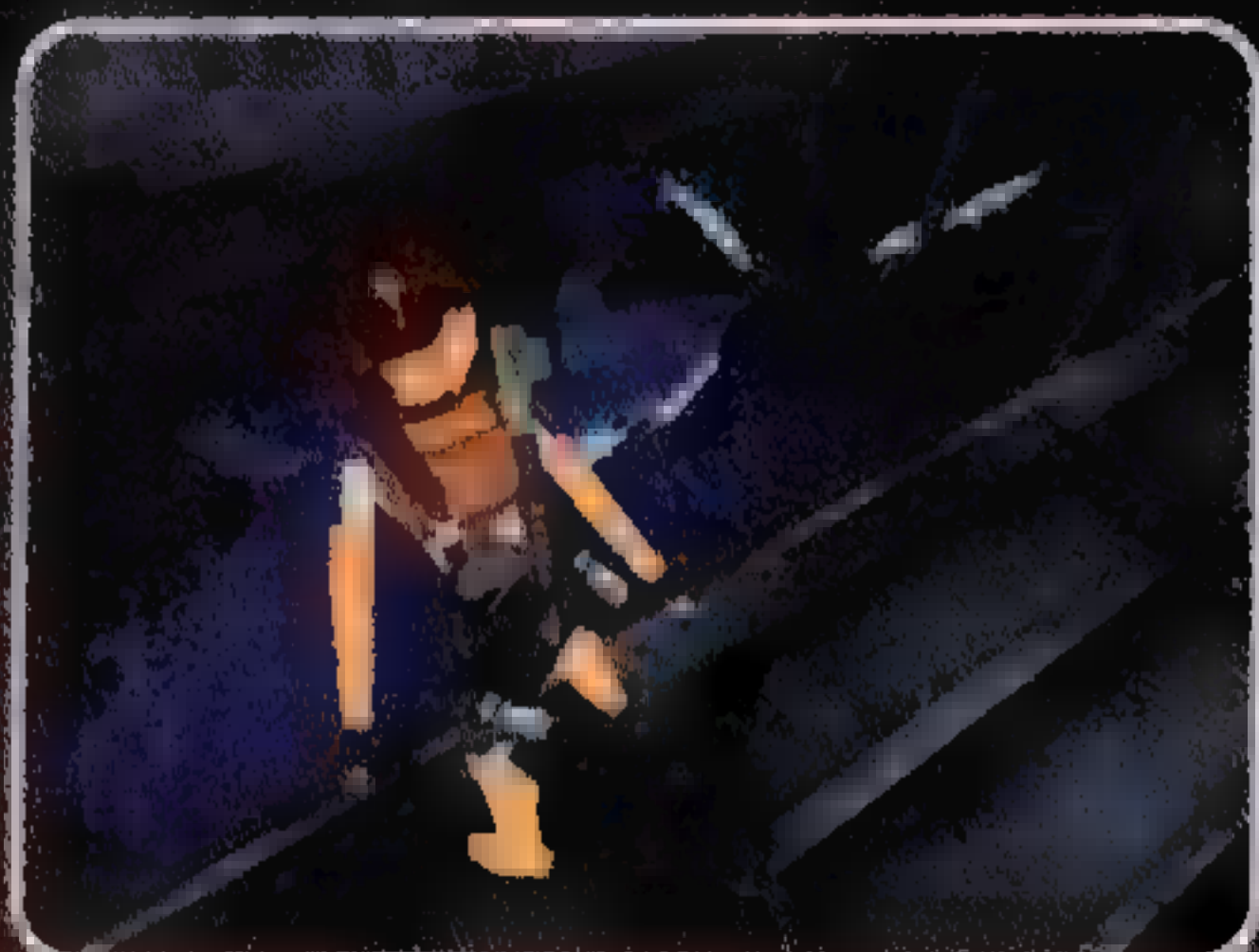
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myth
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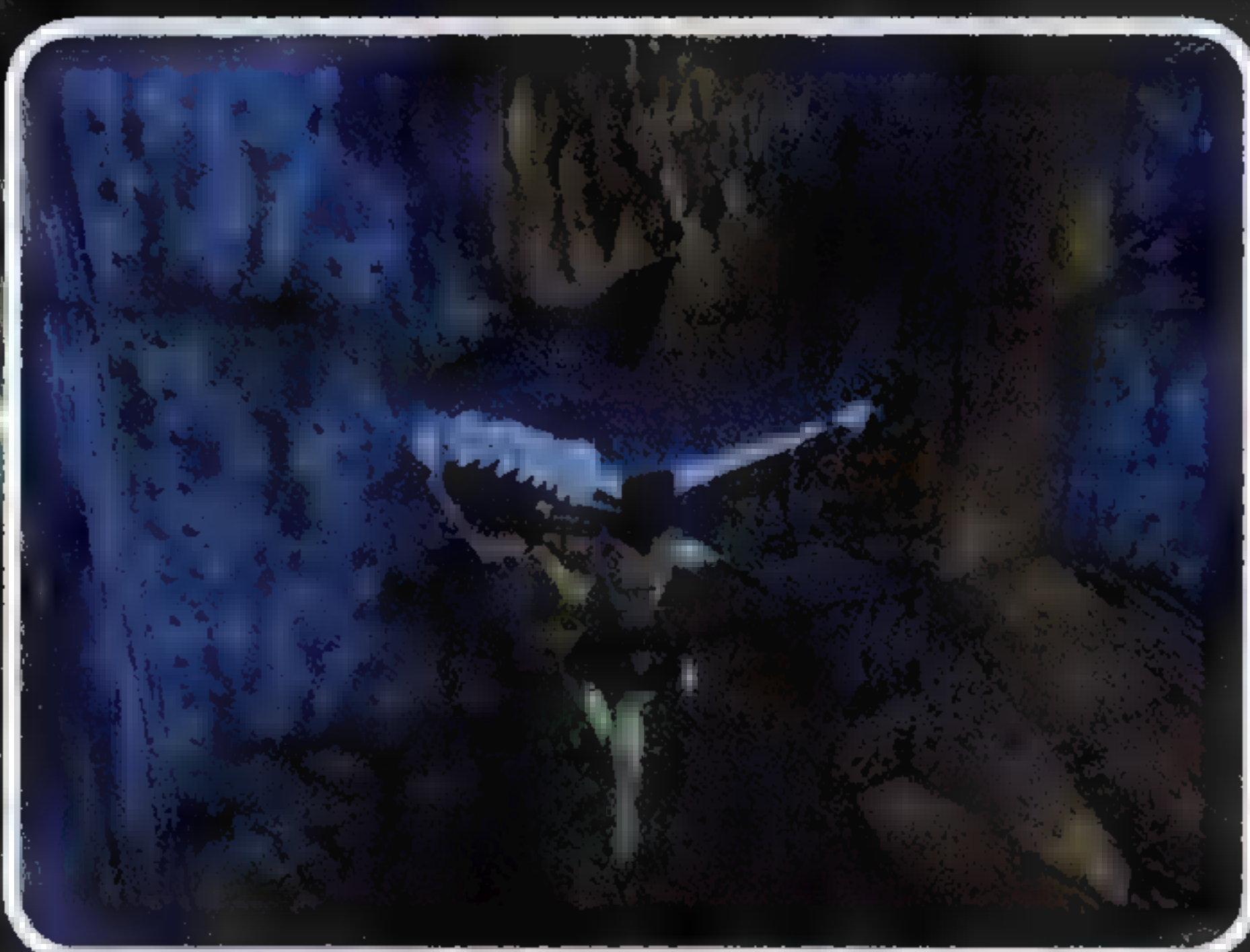


EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

Tomb Raider



We're going
to need a
bigger boat!



Lara Croft is the best presenter Blue Peter never had. She's sporty, outgoing, intelligent, and more than a little bit posh. Nothing like our own **Charlie Brooker**, you might say. In fact, the only thing they have in common is that they both jump whenever we tell them to.

S

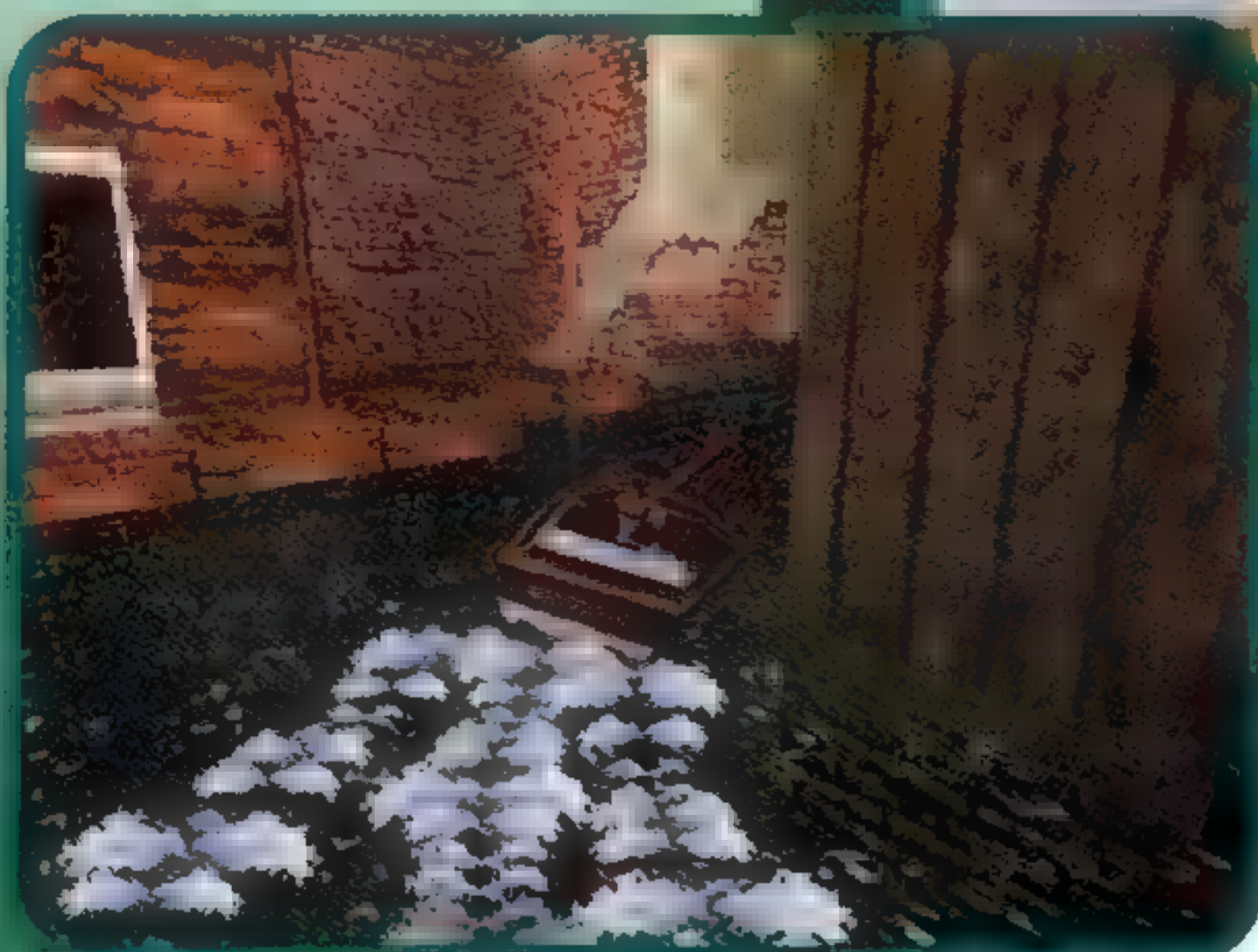
HERE IT IS THEN, TOMB RAIDER II, one of the Christmas heavyweights, eagerly awaited by one and all. (Except your grandmother, who's probably eagerly awaiting the Heartbeat Yuletide Special instead). Ever since the release of 'Tomb-a Numero Uno', Core Design have seen their reputation

*Lara Croft was a star.
Digital Spice, if you like.
And now she's back.*

Doh, can I have a go?

The biggest surprise in *Tomb II* is the introduction of a few new modes of transport to take the strain off Lara's dainty feet now and again. The first of these is encountered during Lara's visit to Venice: an altogether nifty speedboat that makes touring the canals at high speed a hugely enjoyable breeze. Later, high in the mountains of Tibet, Lara liberates ■ skidoo (a kind of snowbound jet ski) and goes a bit crazy with it.

The nice thing is that these vehicles haven't merely been included to provide a quick thrill (although they certainly provide that). And despite being fun, they don't actually make your life any easier either. Instead they're an integral part of the levels on which they appear. For example, solving a problem with the aid of the speedboat is the only way to complete the first level of the Venice stages.



As game designers skyrocket, and have simply sat back and gawped as Lara Croft has become the first bona fide video gaming megastar since Sonic the Hedgehog. She has appeared on the cover of almost every games mag on the market, including this one. She has strolled around on giant video screens with pretentious post-modern ironist and occasional crooner Bono, during the U2 Pop Mart tour. Some cooler-than-thou biscuit arse wrote a ponderous article about her for *The Face* (which also deemed her sufficiently important to slap on the front cover). She has inspired several web-literate spods to erect virtual shrines in her honour, many of which included surprisingly competent nude 'photographs' of their heroine - especially impressive when you consider the artist only had one hand free with which to draw. There was even talk of her releasing a single written by Dave Stewart. Lara Croft was a star. Digital Spice, if you like.

Anyway, someone left the door open, and she's back.

Double trouble

In an attempt to keep momentum going, the game designers have decided to make Lara Croft a bit more of a troublemaker. We at *Zone* Castle have heard it.

Light fuse and retire

As is the case in a Seventies discotheque, it's essential to keep hold of a good set of flares if you want to succeed in *Tomb II*. Ho ho, um, ho. The advent of spiffy new lighting effects has gone to the designers' heads in places, and there are a bewildering number of 'dark' areas, which must be illuminated by one of the aforementioned pyrotechnic devices. If you run out of flares, you're in trouble - although it *is* possible to momentarily light the room by letting off a pistol (which isn't very convenient really, especially if you live in a block of flats). There are even dark *underwater* sections. Reactions to the abundance of unlit stages is likely to be mixed, although they help build atmosphere, and they look cool. Others may beg to differ.

It all depends on how much you enjoy squinting, I suppose.



(Right) Look at that - moody lighting, flaming torches, arcane hieroglyphics, and a couple of intricate ornaments. That's a tomb alright.

(Below) Lara waits in vain for the flooded streets to clear.





the policy of *Tomb Raider II* background plot into one handy little burst, which shakes an angry defiant fist at all known laws of grammar and innumerable sentence constructions, and concentrates instead on providing a mass of information within an incredibly short space of time. Those of you with video-recorders attached to your eyeballs might like to hit the record button and then play it back later in slow motion. Are you ready? Go.

immensely powerful dragon of love... Fama Nom, ancient Chinese cult... 'Dagger of Xian... He who plunges the dagger deep into his heart will gain the power of the dragon... guarded by shaven-headed Tibetan monks... Great Wall of China... hidden palace... Lam-Croft... unique... thrilling... devious... etc, etc.

Okay. You can stop now. That's the basic background to the game. Basically it's *Indiana Jones* territory again, only far more attention has been lavished on the story's unfolding storyline. The Eidos segments are genuinely entertaining, the polygonal cutscenes snappy and to the point. This time around, Lara's adventure progresses smoothly and logically, and the levels themselves are far more varied than the original selection: it isn't just tomb after labyrinthine tomb. A large proportion of the action takes place outdoors, and across locations as diverse as Venice, Tibet, and China. The selection of indoor playing areas is also encouragingly imaginative, with an immense open house, a complex platform ship and an ornately-decorated monastery all used to good effect at various points. Don't play the game if you live in Coventry, because the intricate and enchanting architecture on display herein will sit in cruel contrast with the wretched piss-stained concrete boxes that dominate the character-less municipality you call home. And for God's sake cheer up.

Puzzles and action, alive alive-o

The programming team obviously recognised the wisdom of the maxim 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it', since the tried-and-tested *Tomb Raider* mix of puzzle-solving, exploration, and occasional violent conflict remains largely unchanged (although the violence quotient has been upped considerably). Enemies come in many different shapes

The girl can't help it

Lara herself has received a slight makeover. The fearsome triangular bust of yesteryear is replaced with an altogether curvier model, which makes her look as if there's a tiny Ford Ka trying to reverse out of her shirt. The haircut, too, has changed - a convincingly animated ponytail now dangles behind her. It's just like the real thing. Occasionally it catches the breeze. She can even flick it over her shoulder, just like Linford Christie does after he's finished doing his pee-pees. Then there's the new costumes, which are discussed in greater length elsewhere in these pages.

Cosmetic changes are one thing, but Lara's also been endowed with some

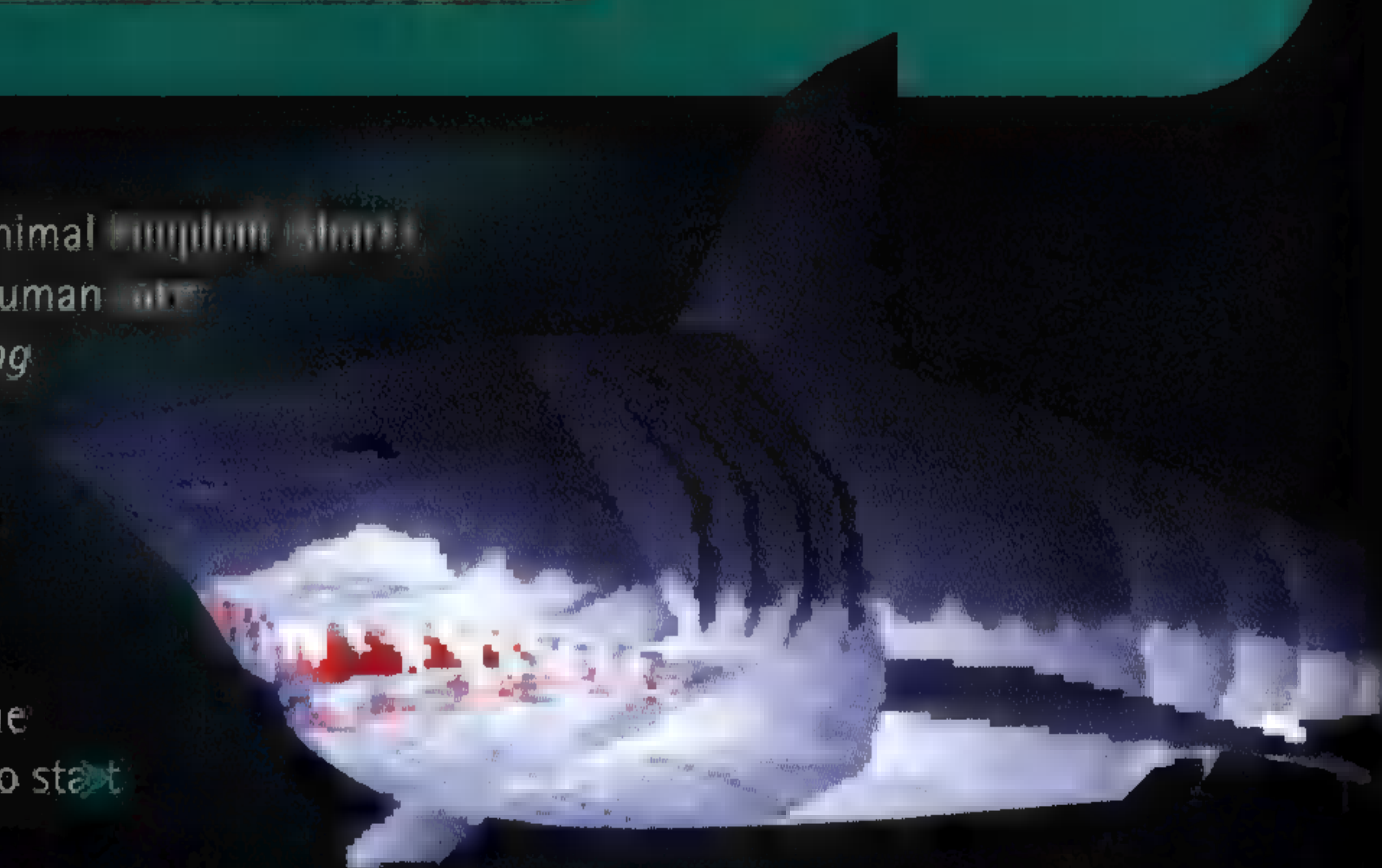
handier attributes; such as climbing sideways and turning quickly underwater.

And in the words of Thora Hird, *Praise Be!* - the team have addressed one of the largest criticisms of the first game - the unresponsive keys - by fine-tuning the control system. Previously, if the player hit the 'Jump' key when Lara was in the middle of a 'run' animation, the leaping process would only commence once the animation had run its course. In other words, she kept running off the bloody platforms all the time. Now the action is more or less instantaneous, although *PC Zone* still had the occasional mysterious mishap (usually resulting in our sudden and violent death by plummeting).

Of course, the good lady wouldn't be quite so endearing if she wasn't continually waving a life-threatening weapon in your face all the time, which is why there's a bunch of new weapons too, including a grenade launcher (as seen in most films starring Chuck Norris) and a harpoon gun (as seen on board Japanese whaling vessels and in most films starring Chuck Norris).



and sizes, and are drawn from the animal kingdom (snakes, tigers, eagles and giant ants), the human race (plenty of psychotic gunmen in *Killing Zoe* style eyemasks), and the world of legend (er, The Abominable Snowman). All of them are superbly designed and expertly animated (especially the sharks). The AI has been improved, and while none of the aforementioned gunmen are about to start

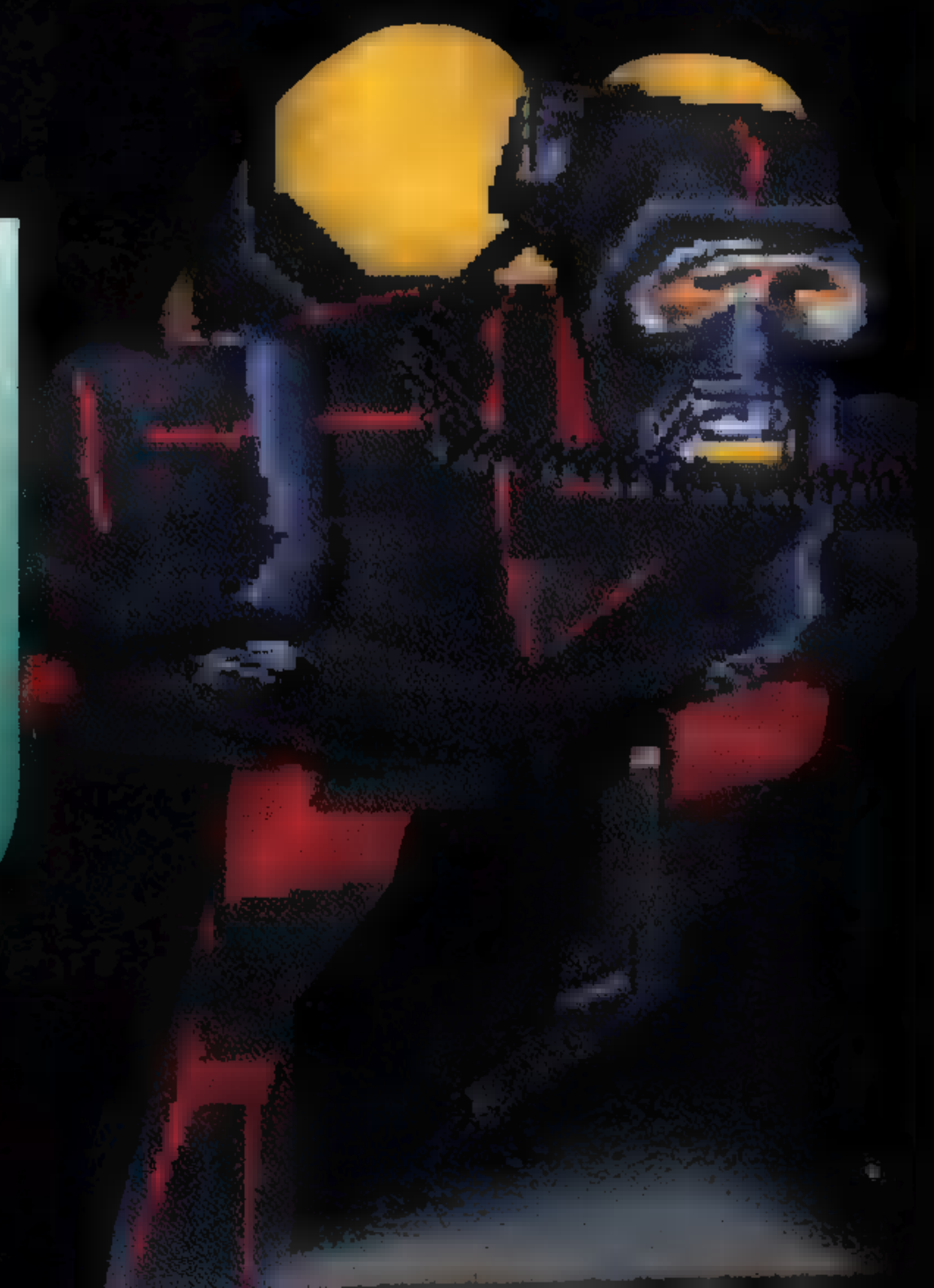


There are plenty of psychotic gunmen in Killing Zoe style masks.

Now that's what I call peril

The first game was hazardous enough, yet there's far more peril to be encountered in *Tomb 2* - enough to keep Penelope Pitstop types shrieking 'hay-yulp, hay-yulp' well into the next millennium. Throughout the course of the game, Lara is in danger of all of the following and more: breaking her arms and legs in a heavy fall, catching fire and burning to death, drowning, being eaten alive, skewering herself on shards of broken glass, being sliced or crushed by a carefully-concealed booby trap, and at one point even plummeting helplessly into a surreal, infinite void. Our advice is to save your game and to save it often.

Believe us, you'll need it.



Does my bum look big in this?

Lara Croft spent the whole of *Tomb Raider* wearing the same outfit. She clambered up daunting rock faces, leapt across gaping ravines, swam through mighty rivers, and spilt the blood of countless violent aggressors across a period of several adventure-packed weeks - yet *not once* did she change her clothes. Let's face it, by the time she returned home, her knickers would have looked, felt and smelt like she'd spent a fortnight using them to rub the skin off corpses in the basement of a turd factory. Attractive? No, it isn't, is it?

Hygiene finally triumphs in *Tomb Raider II* - Lara alters her outfit to suit her surroundings on a couple of occasions. And the pathetic onanists amongst you can unclench those clammy fists now, because no, you *don't* get to see her changing - although the game *does* include a slightly 'saucier' costume in addition to the ones we're mentioning here. We just don't want to spoil things for later, that's all. Lara's wardrobe of weird and wonderful kit consists of the following:

THE 'LARA CLASSIC'

The instantly-recognisable ensemble from the original *Tomb Raider*: ultra-tight sky-blue T-shirt, buttock-clasping khaki shorts, belt, twin holsters, insolent sneer. You know it, I know it, let's not waste time yakking about it.

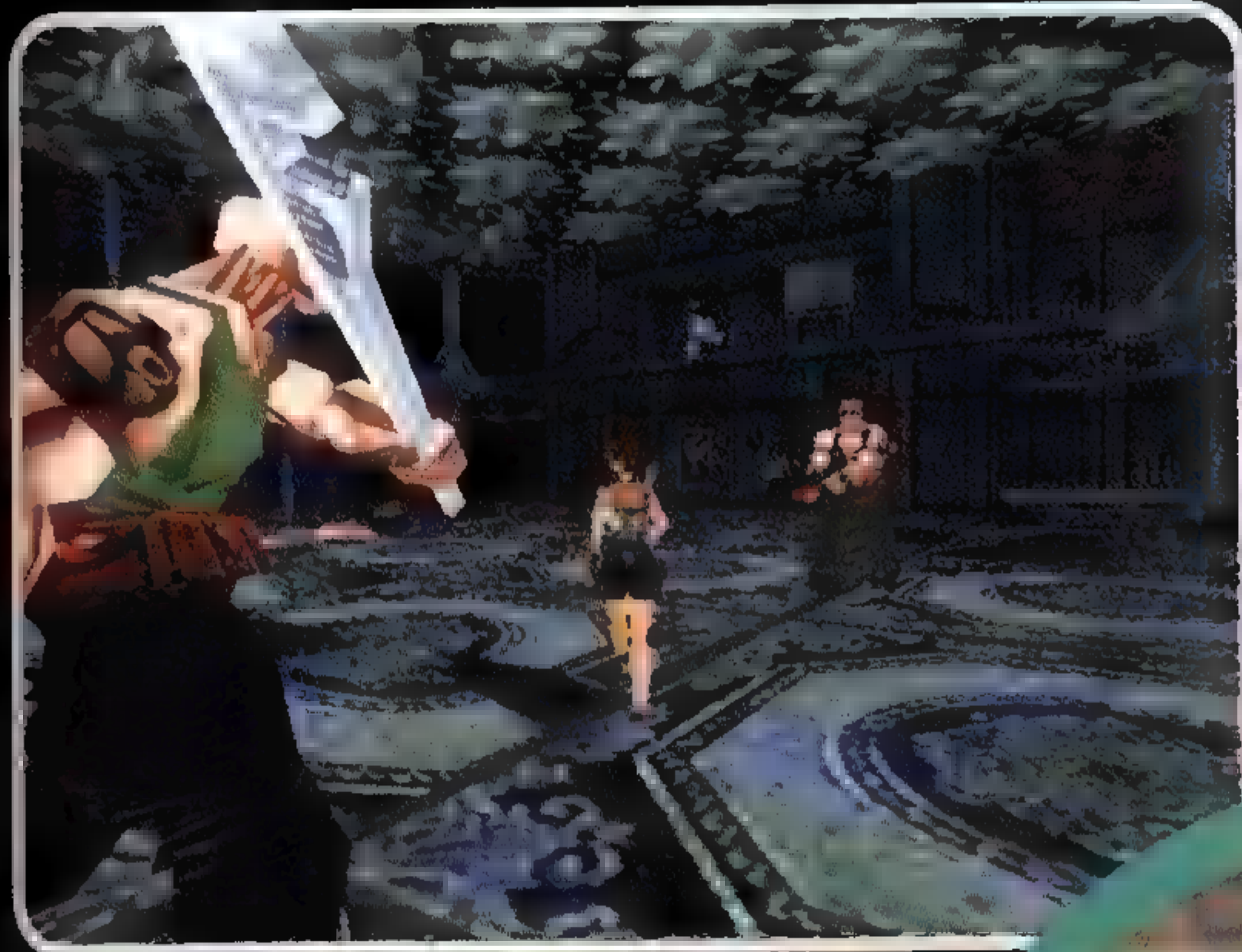
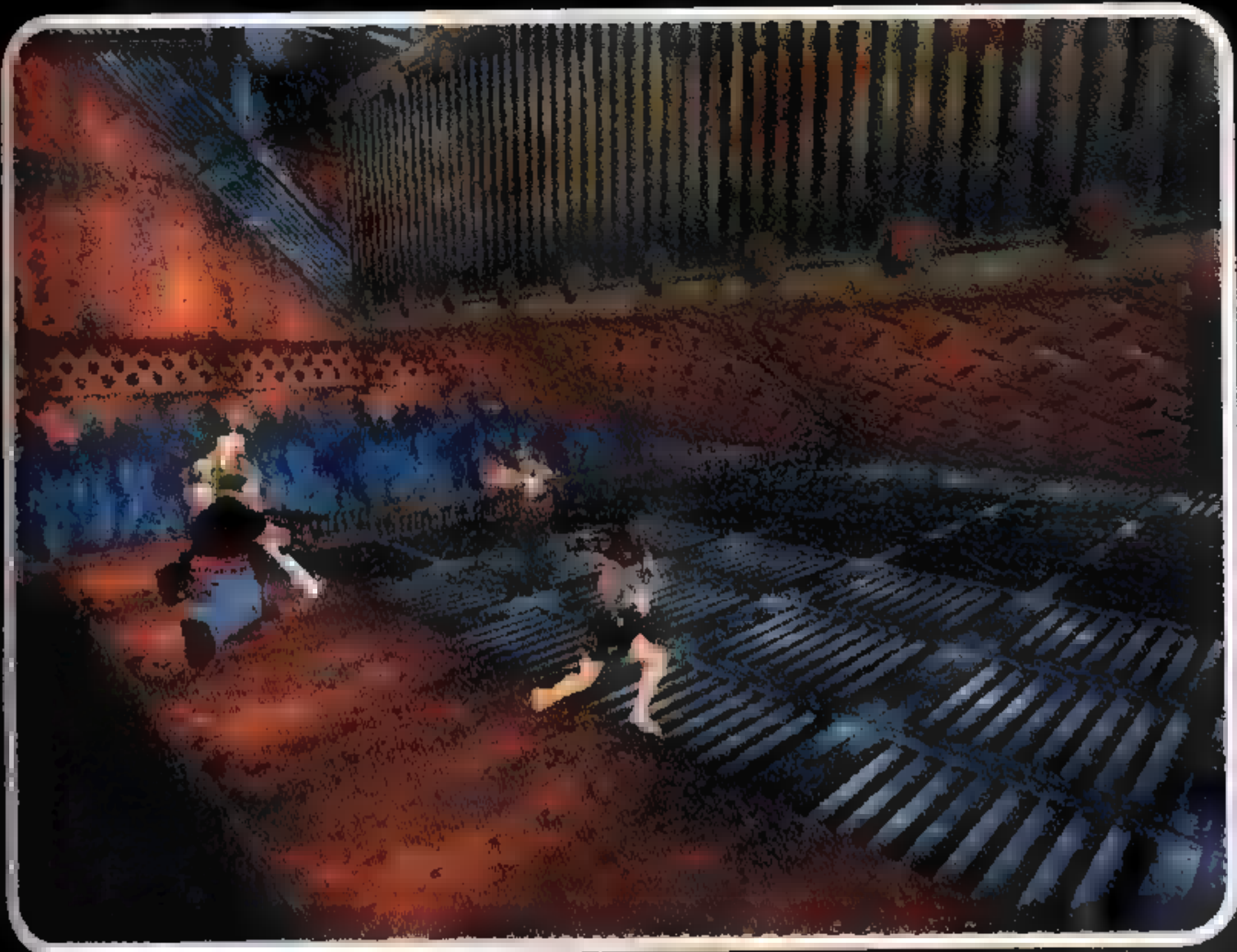
THE ALPINE JACKET

Approximately halfway through the game, Lara ventures into the frozen isolation of the Tibetan foothills, an environment so remorselessly cold, the natives perpetually hurl cupfuls of boiling water into their own faces in an attempt to prevent their eyeballs from freezing. Turning up in a t-shirt would be exceedingly stupid given the unforgiving nature of the climate, and so to this end, Lara dons an attractive alpine jacket during these frost-bitten sections. Its warm, downy fleece keeps her snuggler and cosier than a fat dog in a duvet avalanche. Well, it warms her *upper* half anyway - for some reason she's decided to retain her trademark skimpy shorts, so by rights her thighs should be covered in goose bumps you could rest your chin on.

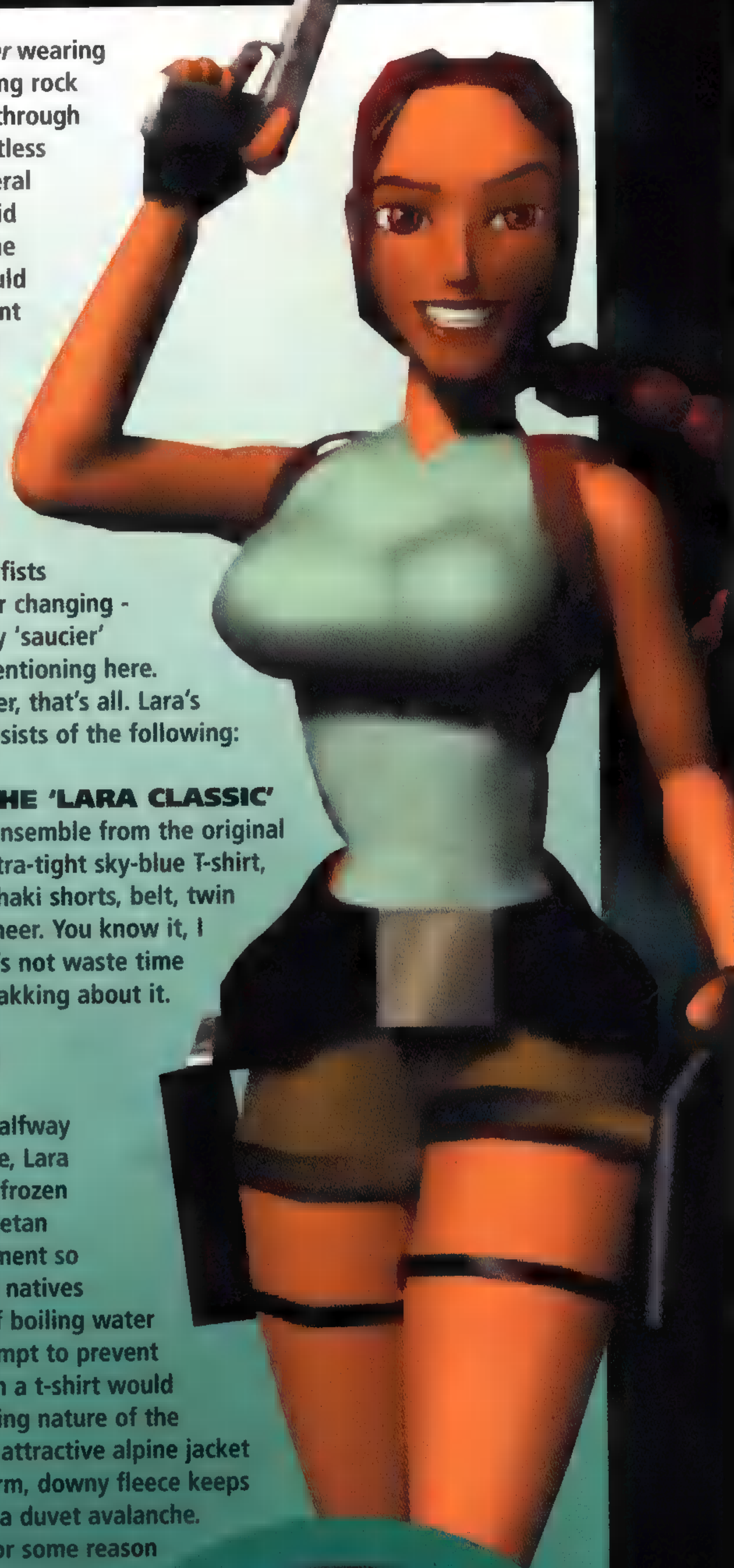
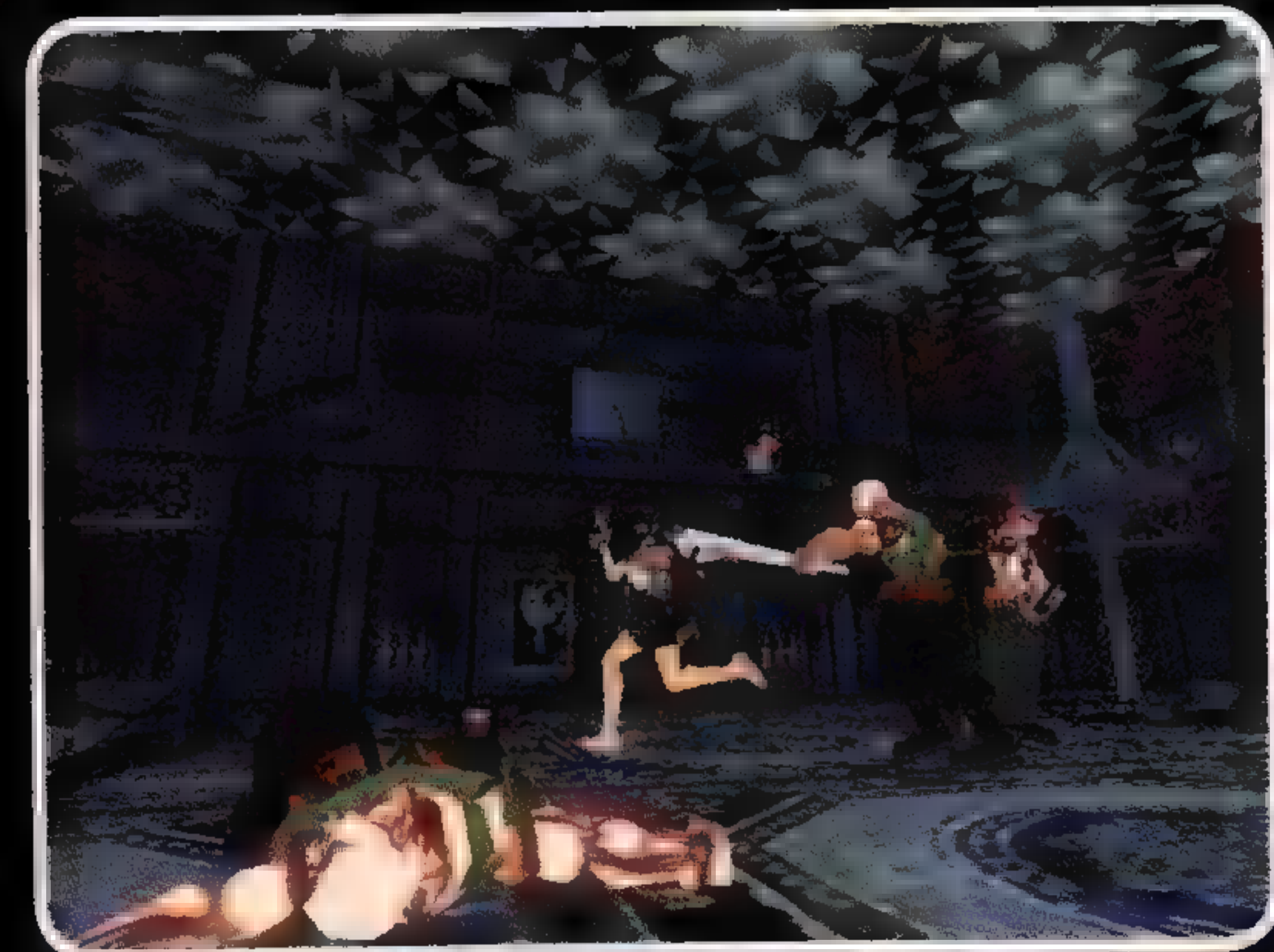
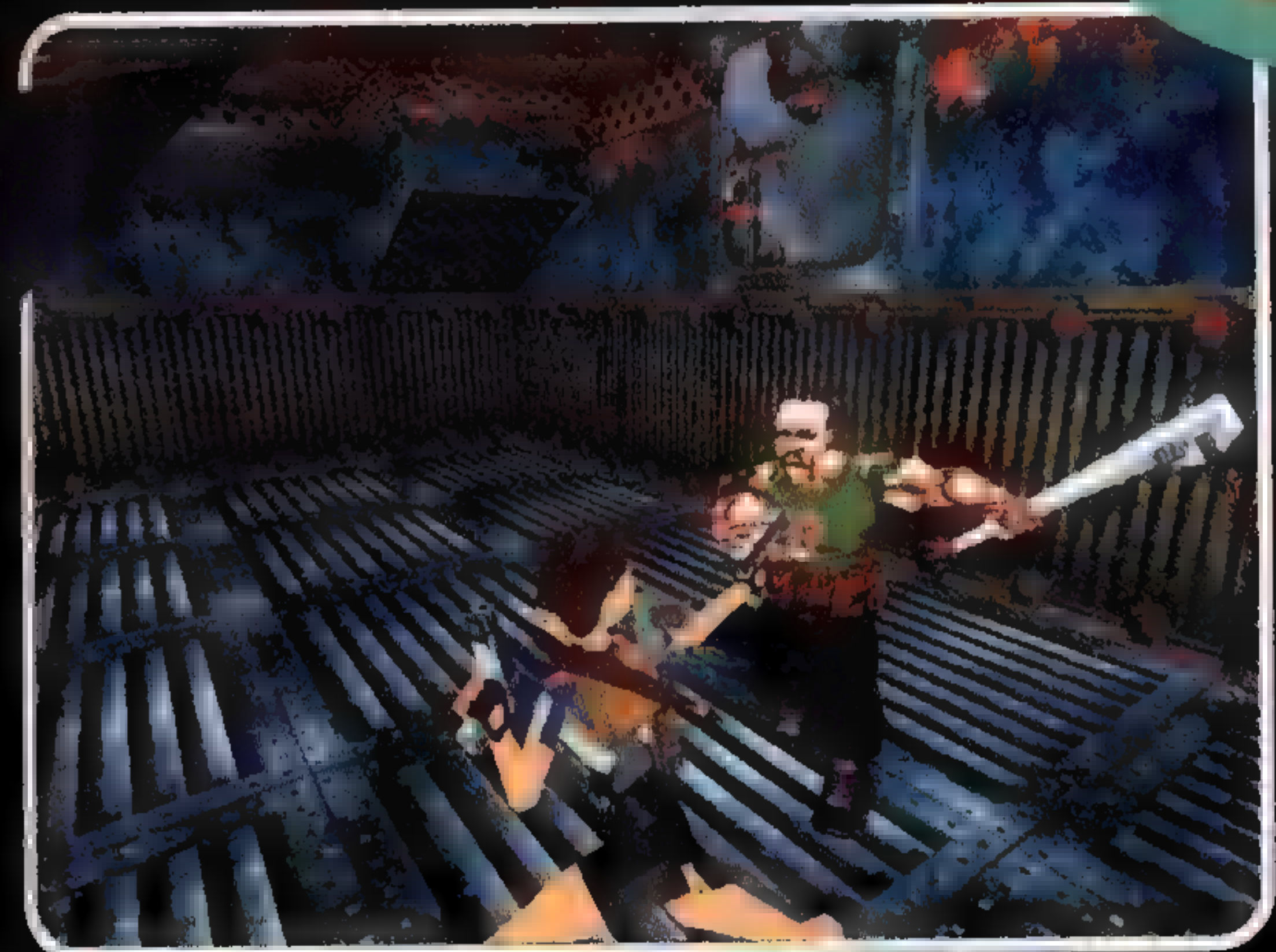
THE WET SUIT

There are times when the plot dictates that a girl simply *must* strip off completely and swim around as naked as nature intended: unfettered, unashamed, and right in the viewer's face. Not in *Tomb Raider II*, however. Lara Croft isn't quite as clothes-o-phobic as Brooke Shields or Amanda Donohoe, and has insisted Core provide her with suitably aquatic attire to spare her blushes. Et voila - the skin-tight rubber wet suit: undeniably practical, yet also more figure-hugging than a fixated numerologist at a large furry digit convention*. Although the outfit is adept at protecting Ms. Croft from the icy temperatures of the deep, she has to be careful not to pass wind or it may billow out at the ankles and drag her to the surface like a sodding balloon.

* This is my personal entry in the 1997 Tortured Simile Cup



(Top) Yes, it's as much fun as it looks! (Above) The estate agent described it as a 'bright, modern city flat'. (Right) You run like a girl, Lara. (Below) Are you laughing at my green vest? (Bottom) Lara kicks proverbial butt. You guys should know better than to call her 'babe'.



Our Tomb Raider wish list

It's likely to be quite some time before Core release another *Tomb Raider* game, but here at PC Zone Palace we've been poking ourselves in the brain with thinking sticks in an attempt to compile a list of things we'd like to see in Lara's next escapade. Here are our suggestions - if you've got any of your own, simply write them down on a piece of paper and then throw them away. We don't care about them, you, or any of the things you stand for. You make us puke.

Um, where we were? Oh yes - that list...

- Lara should be pregnant at the start of the game, and must give birth at some inopportune moment during the ensuing action, e.g. whilst dangling from a fifteenth-storey balcony in Prague. The baby can remain attached via the umbilical cord for the next three levels.
- Lara should be replaced by 'Toadfish' from the popular BBC soap opera, *Neighbours*.
- In addition to shooting animals with pistols, Lara should be able to nail their paws to the floor and knock their eyes out of their skulls

with little rock hammers.

- There should be a cutscene in which she straps a Southern Sheriff to a barrel and torments his bottom with a large yam.
- There should be a sequence where she breaks into the home of Robert Kilroy-Silk in the dead of night and steals his lips.
- And then glues them to a balloon and lets it off.
- We didn't have many ideas in other words.

winning ideas. You're right, they're clever and able enough to, for example, climb ladders in prison.

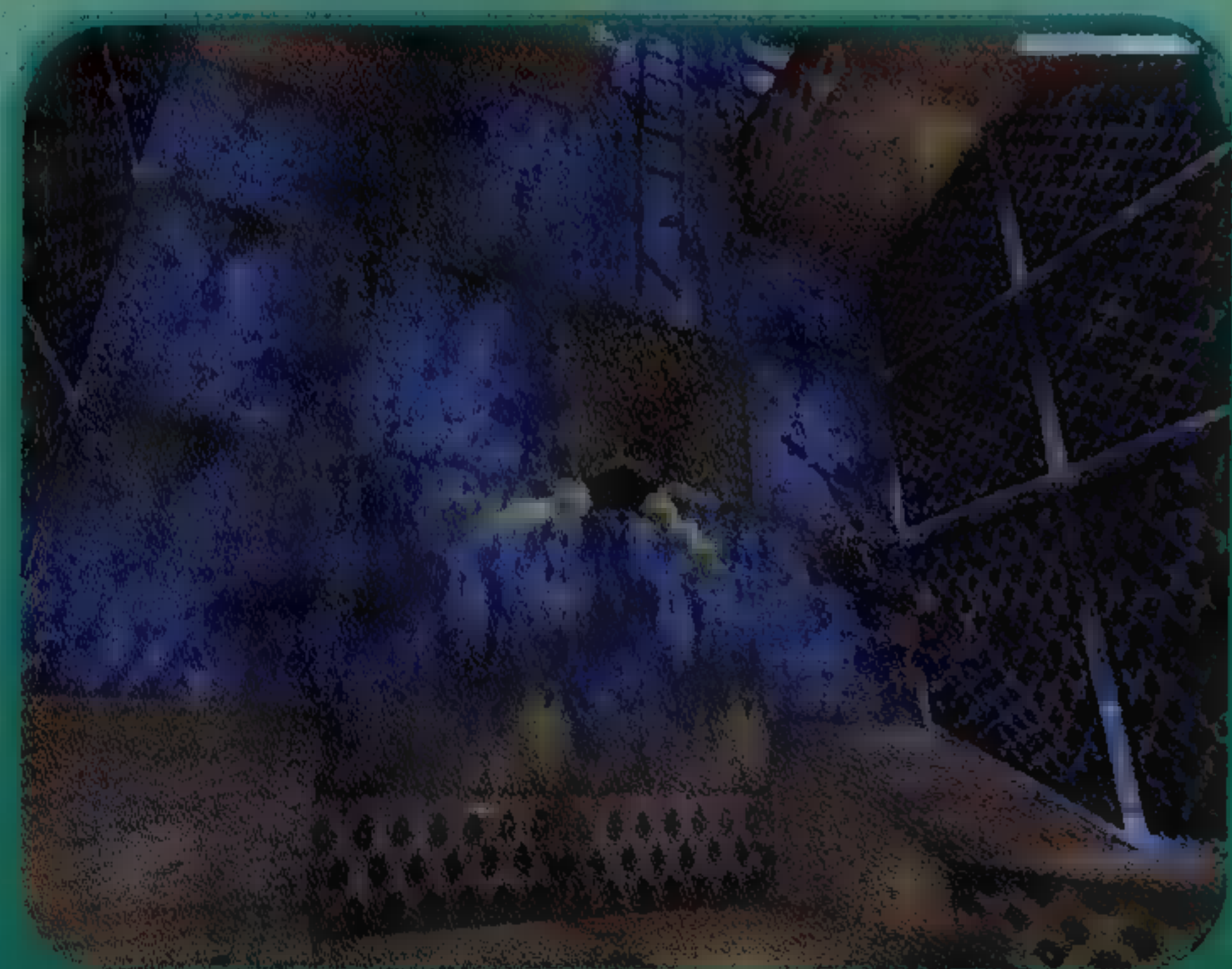
As in the original, much of the combat itself is a little unsatisfying. Lara automatically aims whenever an enemy comes into view; often she spots the danger before the player does. This, and an unfortunate combination of camera angles, can sometimes lead to a situation where you're firing blindly offscreen at an enemy you haven't even seen yet, while in other situations, being able to dodge your assailants depends more on your ability to leap chaotically around in the air like an over-enthusiastic circus fumbler than your

creativity for stealth and cunning. Thankfully, the armed conflict is merely the *least* important element of the game, mainly serving as a device to keep you on your toes.

And now the important bit: the level design, which cannot be praised highly enough. An important aspect of *Tomb Raider* which wide-eyed the action game freaks was the fact that you had to think in order to succeed. It's actually quite a leisurely game, and at times must be pored over like a particularly vexing crossword puzzle. Every five minutes Lara arrives at an apparent dead end, and it's up to you to discover a way out. Thanks to Core's

3Dfx Okay!

Like every other current release worth its salt, *Tomb Raider II* is fully accelerator-compliant. It supports all the cards and in its enhanced form looks truly terrific. It's still lovely in 'normal' mode, too, mind, but if you want to enjoy the game to its fullest extent, we advise you to *buy that sodding card*, if only because the spanky 3D PC version piddles all over the ill-defined face of the comparatively blocky PlayStation one.



At times it must be pored over like a vexing crossword.

ingenious level-editing system (which allows the designers to simultaneously test each area at the same time as they create it), every location has been exploited to the full. The sheer amount of thought that has clearly gone into the layout of each section makes a mockery of just about any other computer game you care to mention. There's not one lazy moment.

Here's a little anecdote which explains what I'm getting at. It's 1984 (or so) and I'm sitting in my bedroom, aged 13, playing a game called *Robin & The Hood* on my Sinclair ZX Spectrum. A friend of mine who has never really played a computer game before is watching me run around on the screen. The scrolling 'forest' background graphic catches his eye for a moment.

"Why don't you climb up that tree?" he asks.

"I can't," I mutter, trying to dodge an arrow.

"Why not?", enquires my friend.

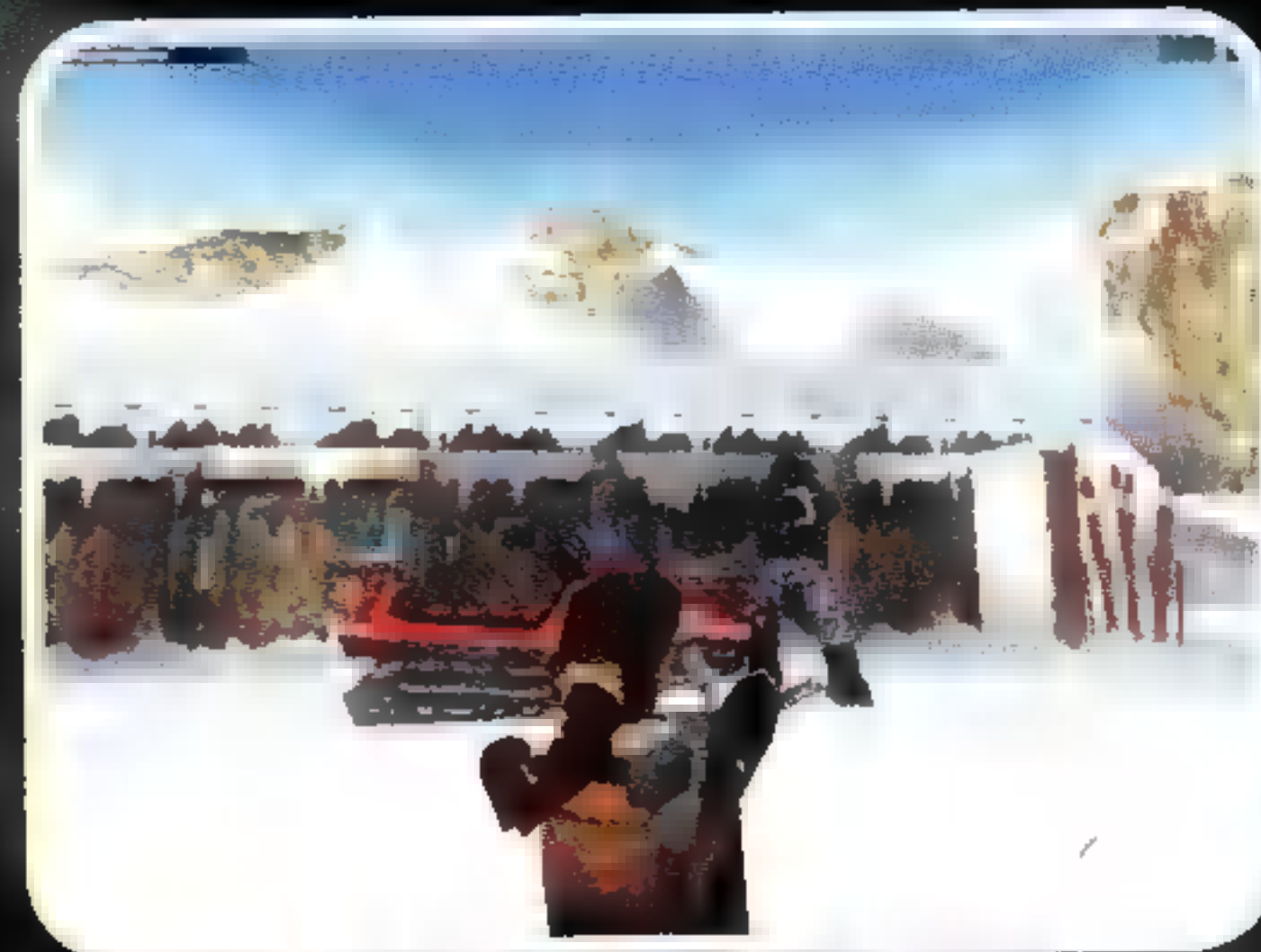
"It's part of the background!", I snap.



(Above) You shouldn't have eaten all that cabbage my dear



(Above) Here's that obligatory celebrity upskirt shot in full



(Below right) The increasingly blasé Lara gets distracted by a nearby cock-robin mid way through a merciless gunfight.

"Try climbing it anyway - you never know!"

"Look, I can't climb the bloody tree, okay?"

"How can you say if you haven't tried?"

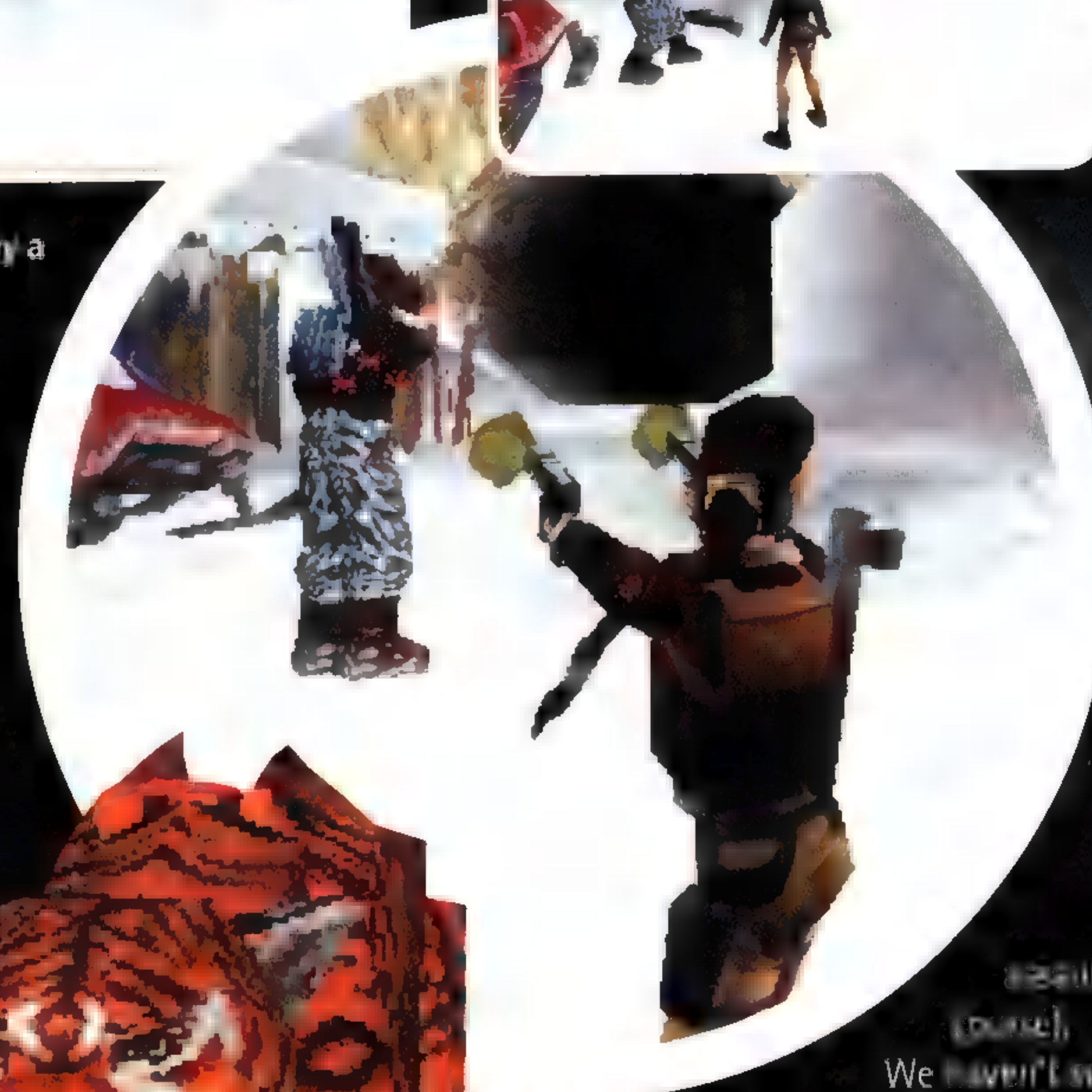
"Well, okay", I think, ignoring the onscreen aggressors for a moment, and make 'Robin' attempt to climb the tree. "See! Happy now? I can't climb the sodding tree - it's only there for decoration!"

"Why that tree (long)", says my cock-robin, almost as if he's in another background. "Well, while I inwardly vow never to invite him back again."

Anyone who's played lots of games should recognise this situation - the moment you realise how (infinite) limited the area you're confined to actually is. Well, it's a moment that does occur in *Tomb Raider II*. It's one game in which you can climb that magnificent tree. In fact, it's essential to keep one eye on the 'background' throughout. That distant Venetian balcony, that unassuming chandelier, that pesky rock - all of these could turn out to be absolutely essential to your continued success.

Much tomb much, much tomb young

Piss it all. We've run out of room. We haven't noticed on and on about how wonderful the atmosphere is yet. Or how fantastic some of the underwater stages are. Or about the new 'death slides'. Or the way you can fully explore Lara's house during the training level (which also includes a new



result (long). We haven't said much as whispered about the music, which is effortlessly, stirringly cinematic, or the sound effects, which are unintrusive and believable. We haven't discussed the merits of any of these things. But then, by now, you're probably clamping at the bit to experience the game first-hand (or play the demo on the CD then - Ed.). That's quite understandable.

Oh - and a quick word about that score.

Yes, it's 54% lower than the original game, but not that doesn't mean the original is better. A year is a long time in gaming, and if we reviewed *Tomb Part I* today it would receive about 90%. The sequel is a better game and deserves a higher score. Now just shut up and go buy it. **Z**

Hey! Does it remind you of Myst?

Of course it doesn't. But that's what a Canadian TV reporter (shooting a piece on "the Lara Croft phenomenon") said to me as he watched me play the game at Core's Derby HQ.

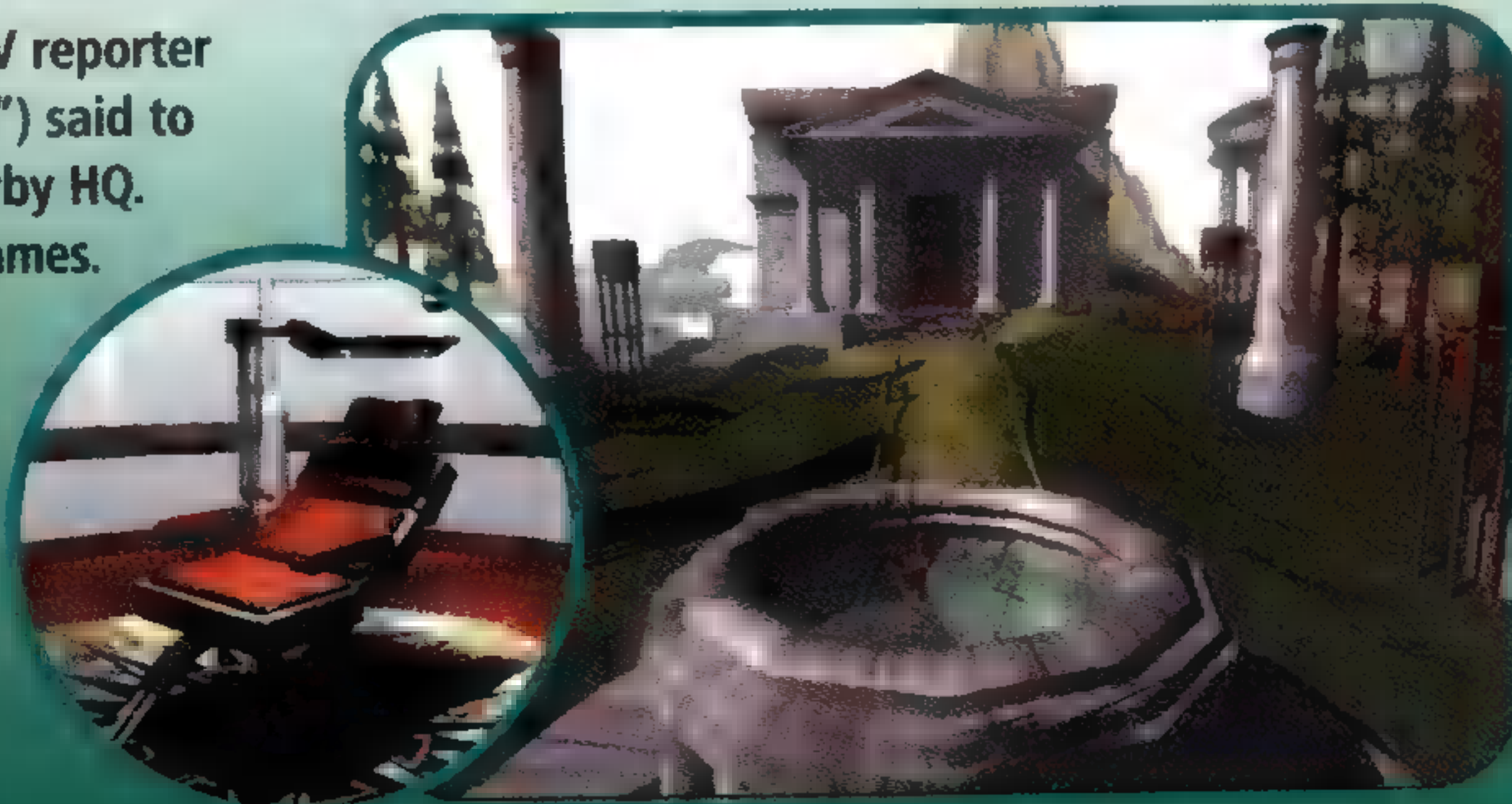
"Er... well, I suppose you solve puzzles in both games. But I can't see any connection myself", I said.

"Oh really? Well, I'm talking about the colours", he replied.

"The colours?"

"Yeah, the colours. They're very *Myst*-like. It reminds me of *Myst*. Did you ever play that? Now that was incredible..."

Bloody Mac users. They're everywhere.



In Perspective

A huge improvement on its predecessor, which is no mean feat when you consider how ground-breaking that was.

Super Mario Land (Gameboy)

Mario 64 (N64)

Prince of Persia (PC)

Jet Set Willy (ZX Spectrum)

Tomb Raider 1 (PC, PSX)

Tomb Raider 2: (PC, PSX)

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Keyboard, gamepad



Score

Exciting, satisfying, and very very big. A marital aid for the mind.



Price: £39.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

Telephone: 0181 780 2222

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Actual 360° views from the game.

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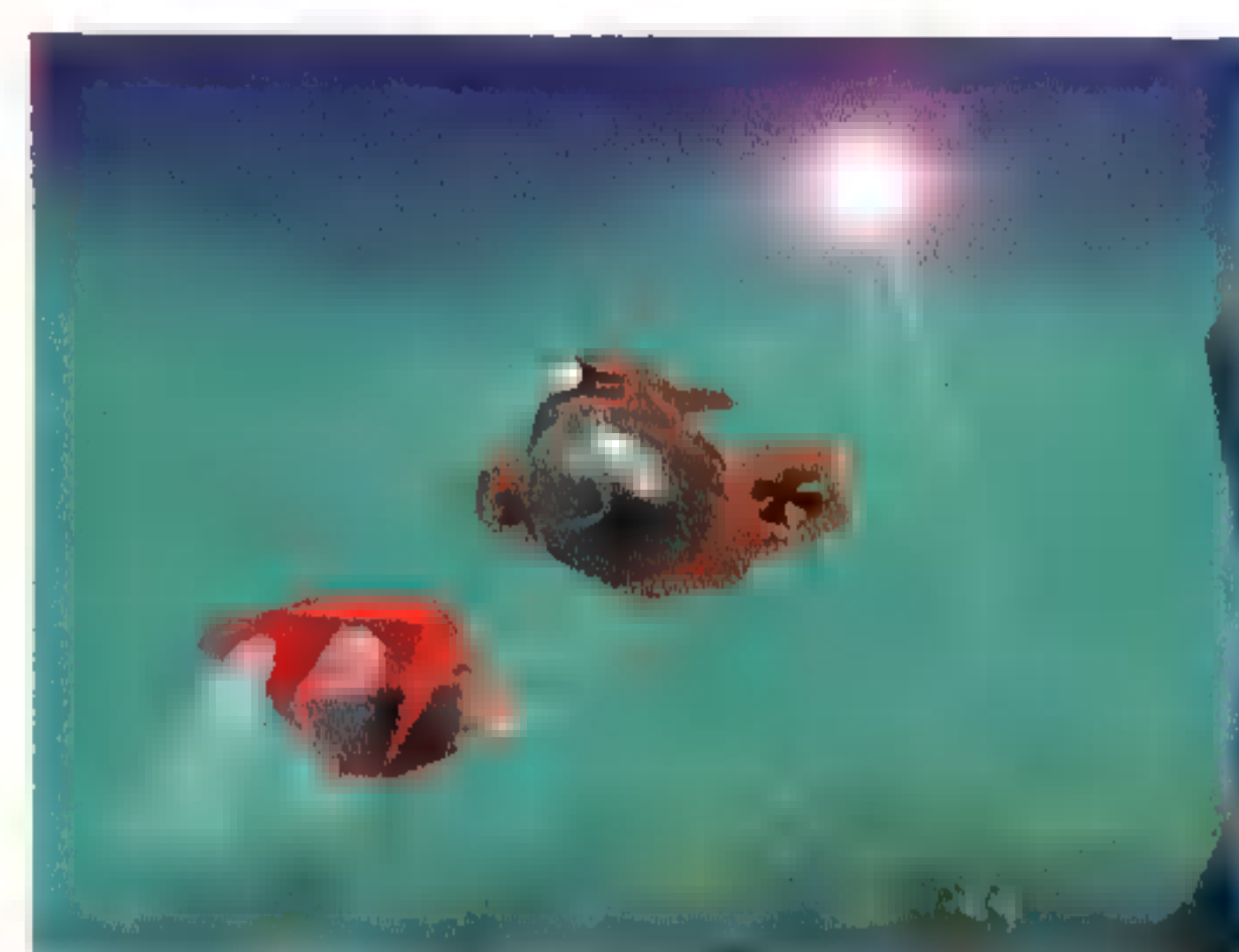
Grand Inquisitor

Since 1979, millions have fought for the love of magic in the Great Underground Empire of Zork. Now the Grand Inquisitor would love to see magic destroyed...and you tormented (a very bad thing). Rock-eating Beogmoids, gnomola rides through Hades, and a bored Dungeon Master who lives inside your lantern... It can only happen Underground.

GRAND OPENING, WINTER 1997 WINDOWS® 95 CD-ROM

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Sub Culture



You should never judge a book by its cover, or indeed a game by its graphics, says Chris Anderson.

If looks could kill...

...*Sub Culture* would be the most dangerous videogame in town. You'll probably spend your first 30 minutes just wandering round the place in your ship marvelling at the

"We've never seen a game capture the feeling of a living breathing underwater universe so perfectly."

fantastic graphics. Then you'll get bored and dash to the nearest city to get your first mission, which happens to be a training mission. This handy test-run teaches you how to manoeuvre your ship, collect some raw ore, and trade it at

T HERE ARE VERY FEW GAMES THAT DRAW admiring glances from the entire office these days. Heads no longer turn when a title with native 3Dfx support shows up (with the odd exception) because we've pretty much come to expect most new games to be accelerated in one way or another. Despite this increasing feeling of indifference to the new breed of 3D games, *Sub Culture* brought the office to a standstill with its breathtaking graphics and mesmerising underwater environment. There were plenty of 'oohs' and 'aaahs' as the pretty little fishes swam around the place and the underwater inhabitants of *Sub Culture* went about their artificial lives.

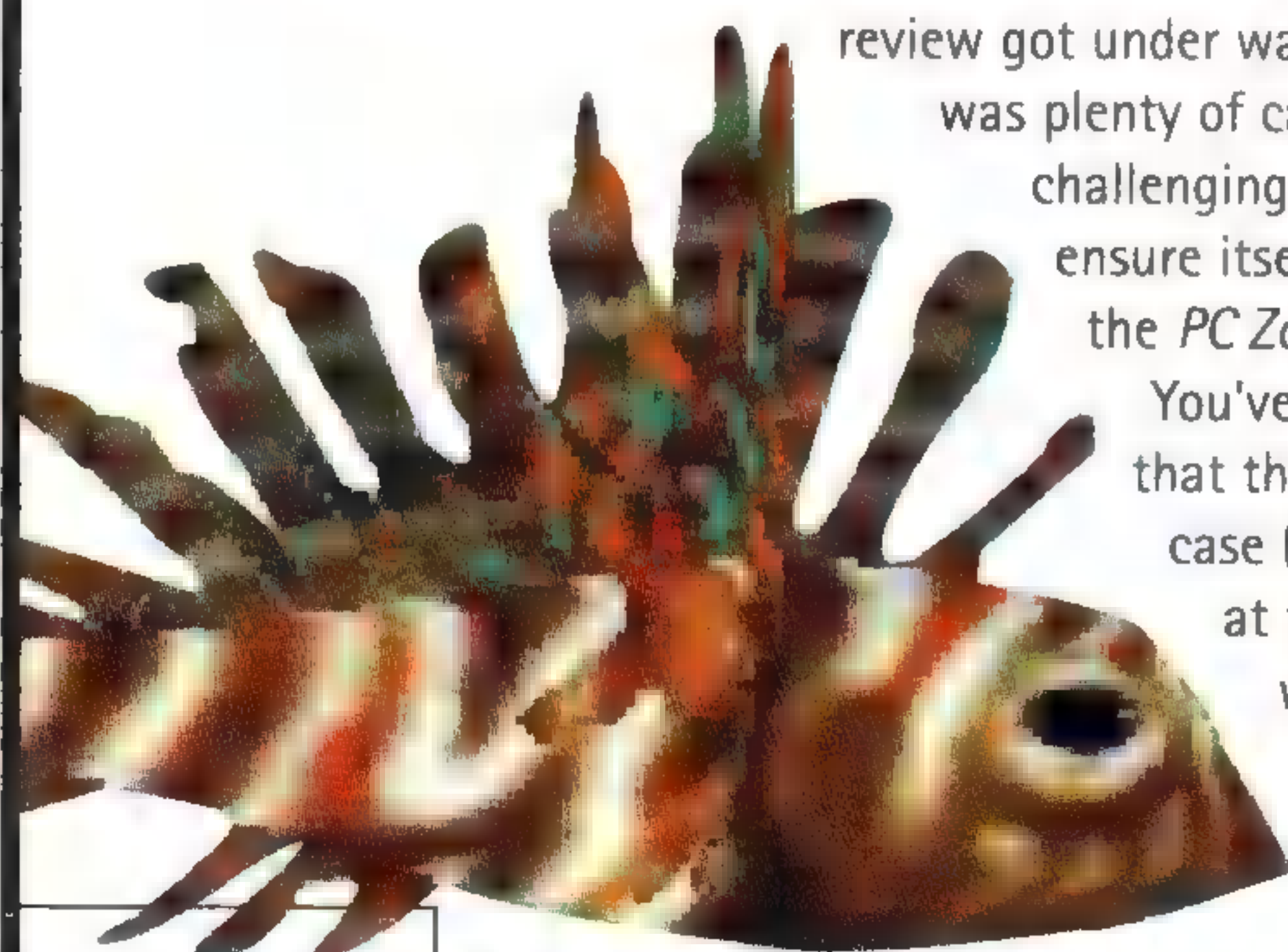
This sort of thing has been done before of course. *Subwar 2050* and *Archimedean Dynasty* spring immediately to mind, but we've never seen a game that captures the feeling of a living breathing underwater universe so perfectly. It would seem that *Sub Culture* had everything going for it before this review got under way. All it needed

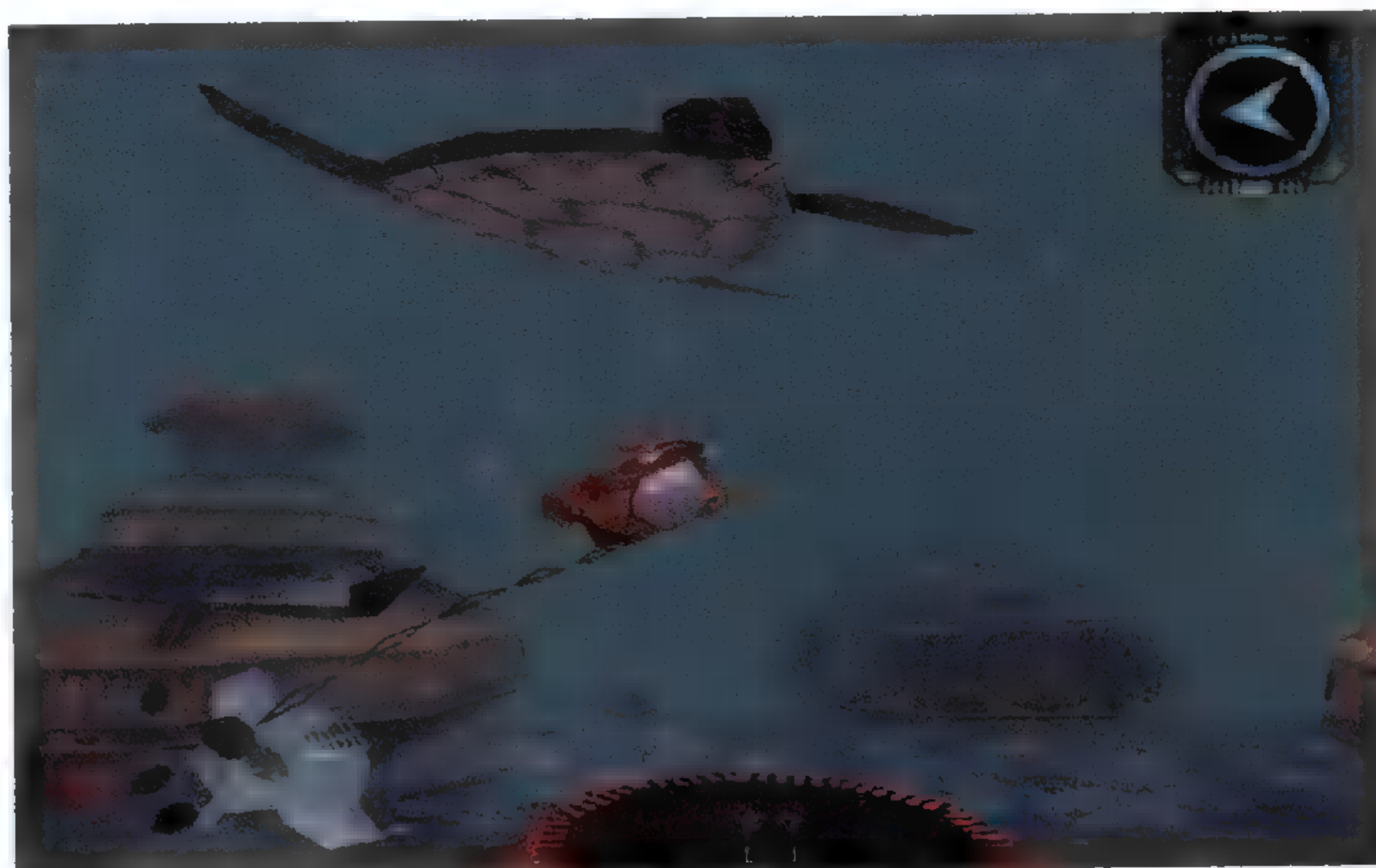
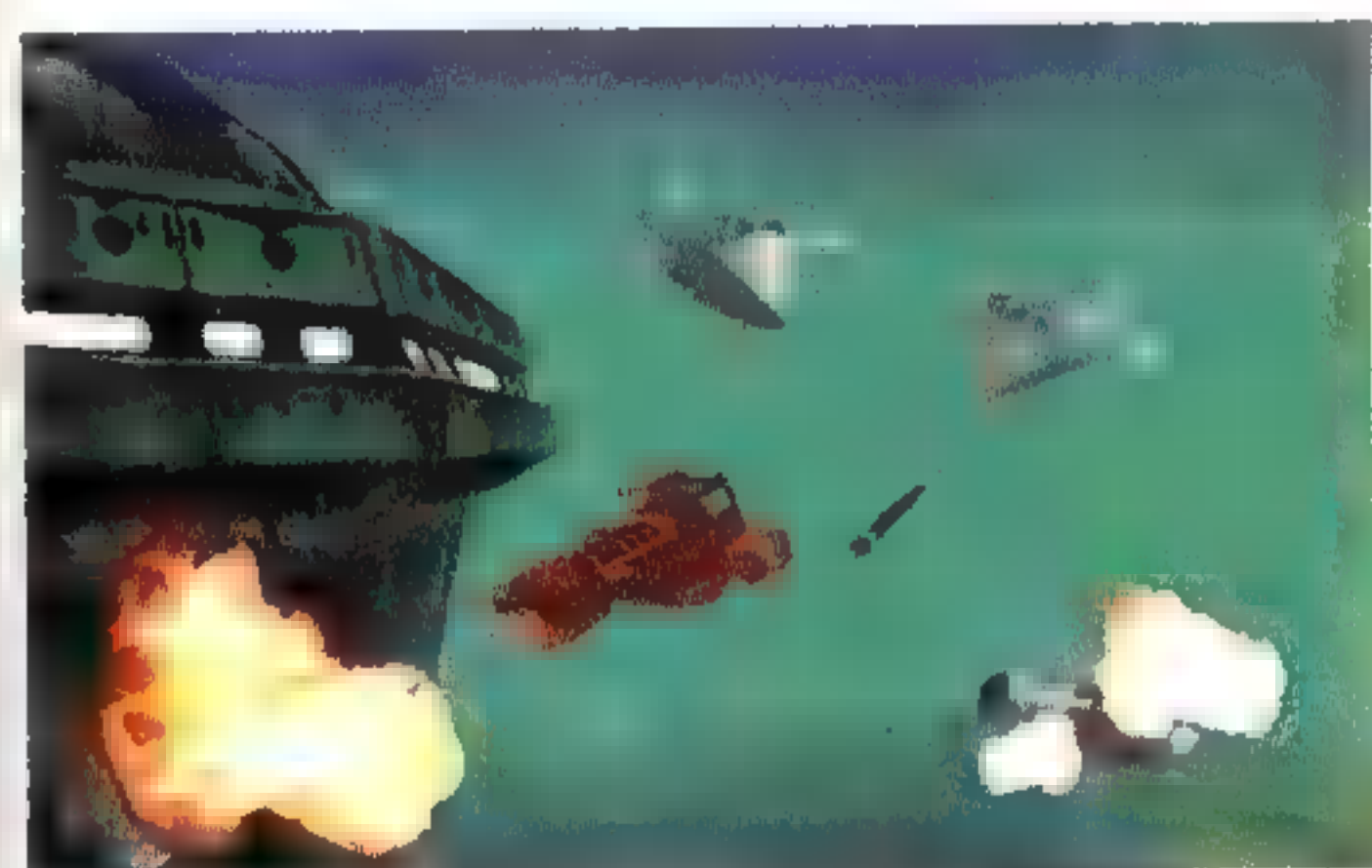
was plenty of captivating and challenging gameplay to ensure itself a place in the *PC Zone* hall of fame.

You've probably guessed that this hasn't been the case (we know you look at the score first). So what went wrong? Well...



One of the hallmarks of *Sub Culture* is the spectacular explosions, but the run-of-the-mill gameplay.





(Top left) The combat sections don't require a great deal of skill – it's hit and hope, basically. (Bottom left) Trade minerals to earn credits and upgrade your ship. (Above right) Dock your ship at underwater colonies to receive your mission briefings.

the refinery for credits. Not the most exciting mission in the world, but it teaches you the basics. Er, the problem is, of all the missions I tried, I didn't find any of them particularly exciting. Maybe it's simply the fact that underwater warfare is just too slow-paced to generate the kind of excitement players get from games like *Wing Commander* or *TIE Fighter* (although *Archimedeon Dynasty* somehow managed to pull it off, as Paul Presley will readily point out). Maybe it's just the missions themselves (escort diplomats to a set location, go kill big nasty jellyfish, blow up misbehaving pirates etc). Whatever the reason, I found *Sub Culture* very, very pretty but, unfortunately, fairly predictable and tedious as far as the gameplay is concerned. However, *Elite* fans who fancy a couple of weeks beneath the ocean waves will be pleased to know there's more to the game than just blowing the hell out of everything. For example...

Trading places

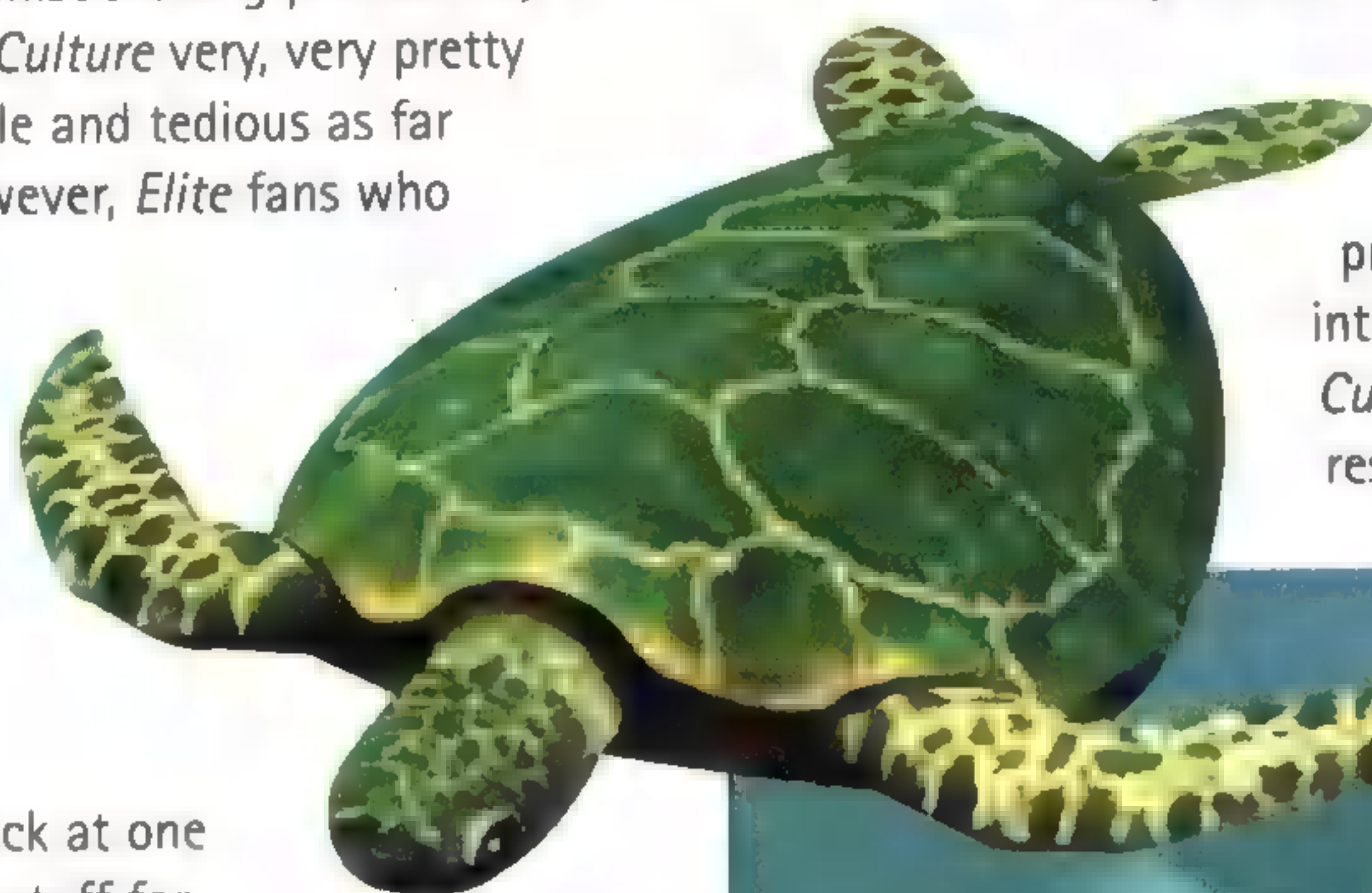
Sub Culture is home to many underwater cities (or colonies). Dock at one of these places and you can trade stuff for credits. It's not entirely dissimilar to *Elite* in that respect, or *Privateer 2*, or any of the million trading/combat games out there. Buy stuff one place, sell it at a profit somewhere else, and use it to upgrade your ship or buy better weapons – you know the drill. The trading elements are a nice touch, but aren't enough to give *Sub Culture* the extra 'something' it needs to drag it out of Averageville.

The amount of weapons and upgrades available for your ship are fairly limited (there are only seven weapons in all) and it doesn't take long to get your ship kitted out with enough stuff to see you through most of the missions. Because of this, there's no real incentive for the player

to spend time working out the best trade routes and checking out the prices of minerals and stuff and building up a large kitty – compare this to *Privateer 2*, where you can be playing the game for days and still be trying to get enough money together for that fantastic new ship you've got your eye on.

I'm not saying *Sub Culture* is rubbish, just that it doesn't have enough challenge or variety to keep seasoned 3D action game fans happy. Having said that, there are probably people out there who will be happy with the slow (some might say thoughtful) pace of the game. There may even

be people who will be happy just to roam around the game area looking at the pretty little fishies. If you fit into one of these categories, *Sub Culture* is the game for you. The rest of you, stay well away.



Hey look, my sub can see in the dark.

Little people

The world of *Sub Culture* is populated by two warring factions: the Procha and the Bohine. These fascinating lifeforms are no taller than a centimetre, and are presumably fictitious or I'm sure we would have heard something about them by now.

You play a mercenary who carries out missions for both of these races. The Procha, for



example, may want you to carry out a mission which will cause the

Bohine no end of grief, while the Bohine will be trying to get you to do exactly the same thing to the Procha. However, if you work for one of the races, the other lot will obviously get pissed off, so choose your missions carefully and watch your back. Of course, you can change allegiances any time you want to if it's profitable to do so, in true mercenary tradition.

In Perspective

Archimedeon Dynasty has a much better storyline than *Sub Culture*, and better combat sections too – in fact it blows *Sub Culture* out of the water in just about every department. *Subwar 2050* is still great, but its graphics look a little dated now, and Pentium owners may find it's way too fast for their achilles. *Privateer 2* is the best combat/trading sim bar none.

Sub Culture

Archimedeon Dynasty

Subwar 2050

Privateer 2

Beck Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, joystick, keyboard



Score

Sadly substandard.

75

Price: £39.99

Release date: Out now

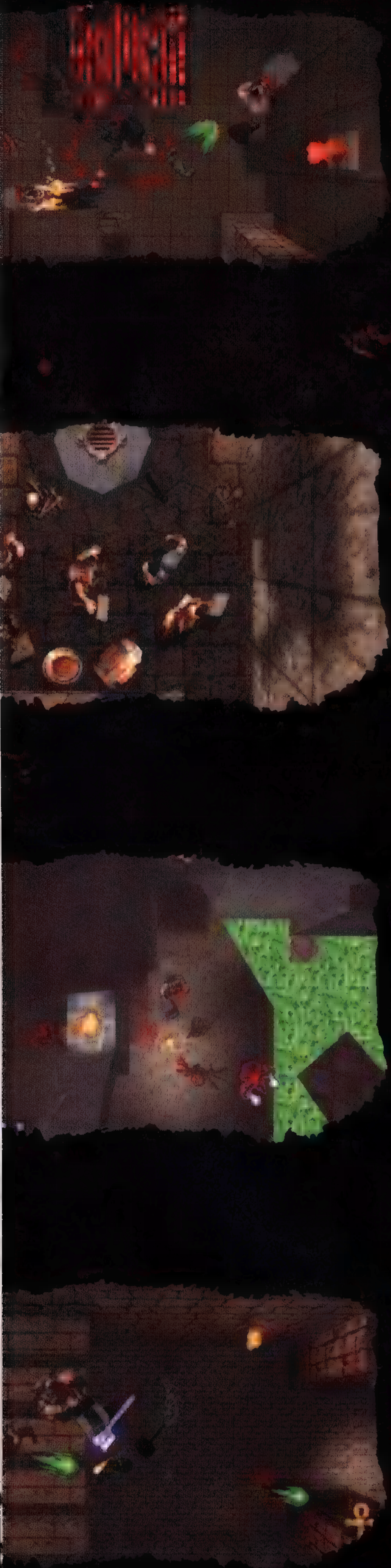
Publisher: Ubisoft

Telephone: 0181 944 0000

Website: www.ubisoft.com

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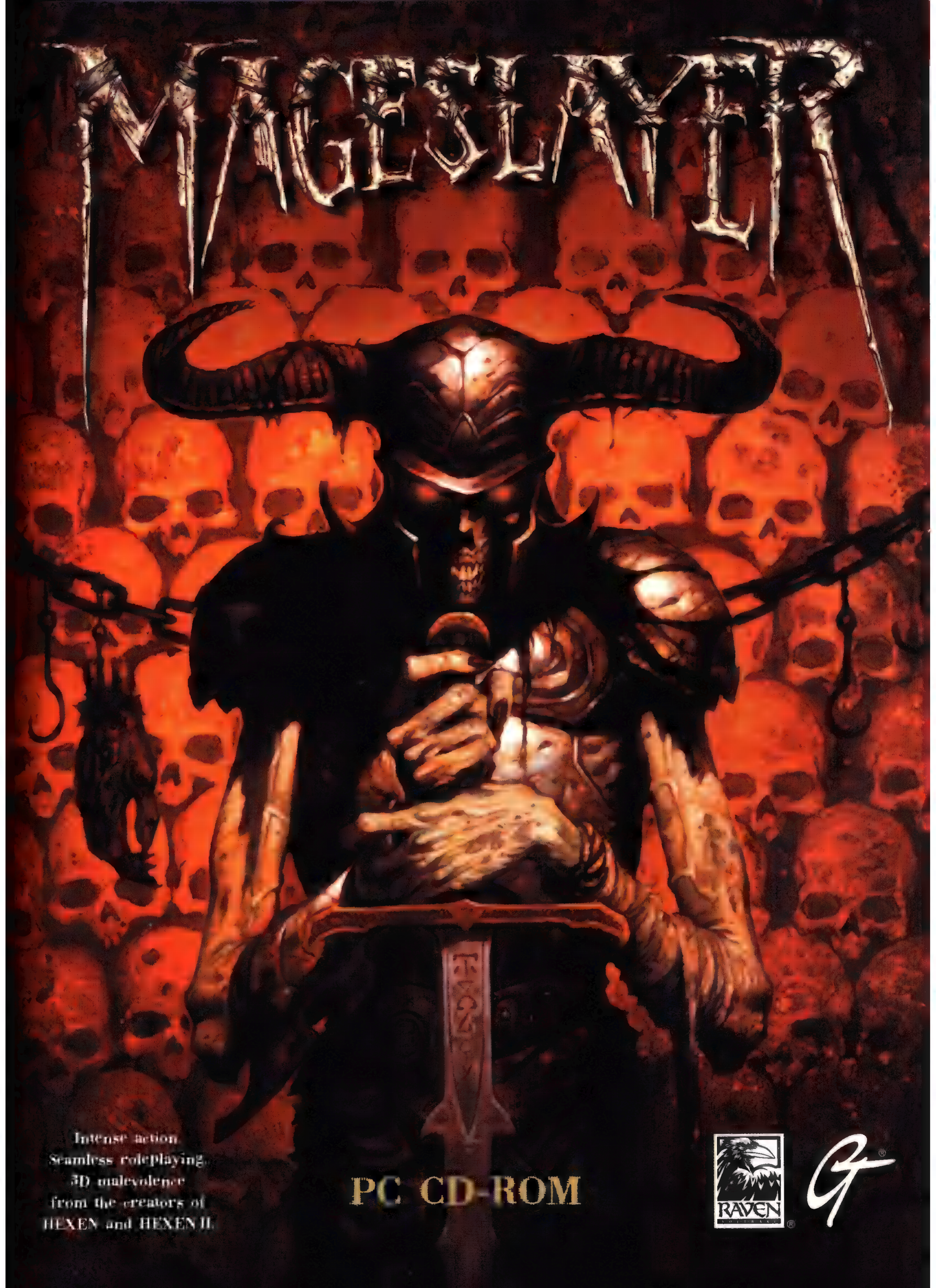
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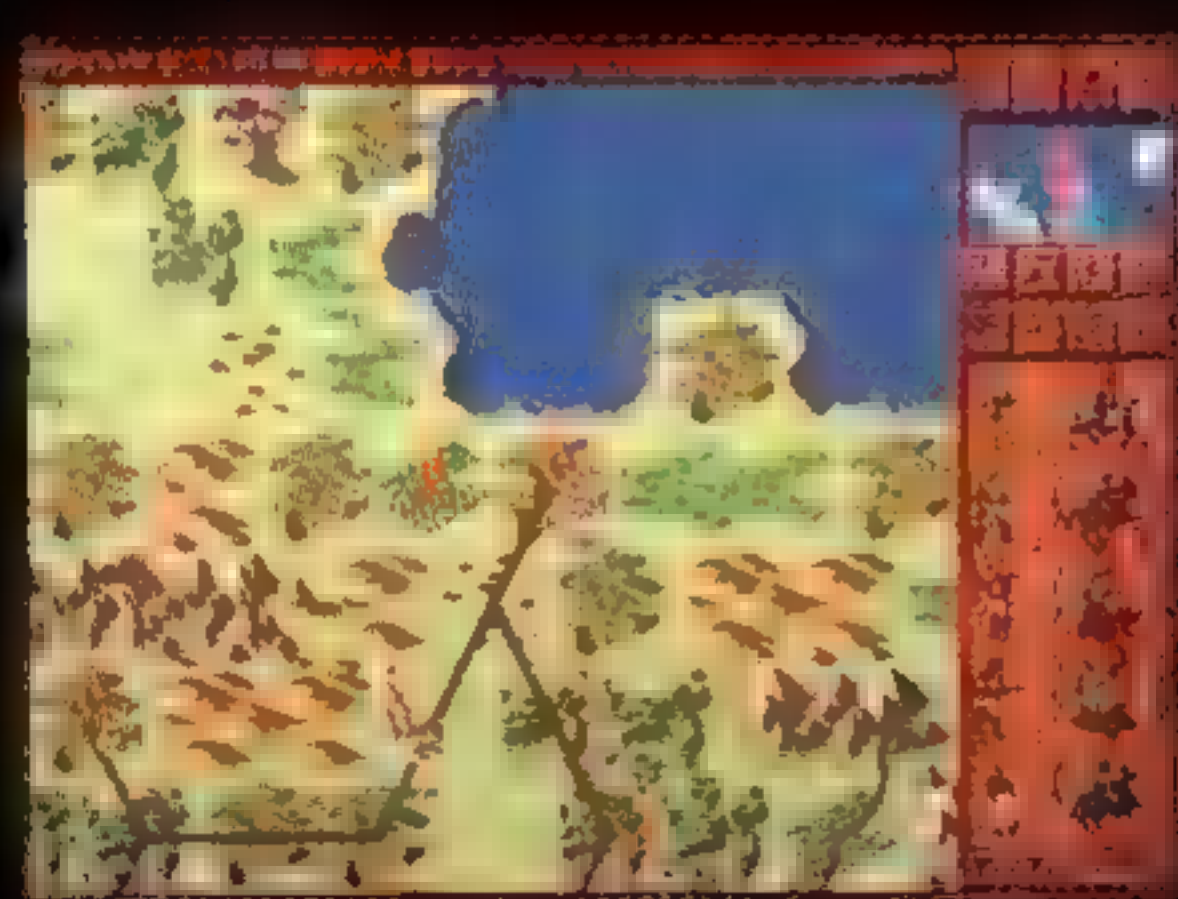
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NHL 98



Few people in the *Zone* office look as much like an ice hockey player as **Patrick McCarthy**. It's not because he's big or imposing – it's because he has enormous pants and a face like a goalie's mask.



IT'S NOT OFTEN THAT SPORTS GAMES draw a crowd when they're played on the office computers. Alright, so Betty Page's *Bondage Crazy-Golf* packed them in, but generally the saps who get to plug their way through the endless sports games do so alone, in a corner, while everyone else clamours around the hot new strategy titles, gasping at the beauty of the hexagons and trying to focus on the tiny figures to see if they're wearing trousers. *NHL 98*, however, drew a crowd. A small crowd, admittedly, but those who witnessed it showed a marked interest in what was going on.

Why?

Because it's an absolute cracker. From the moment the completely over-the-top intro starts, you know you're in for a treat. It's very fast, for a start – the fastest version of the, er, 'beautiful' game I've seen since the first Megadrive *EA Hockey*. Interim versions have improved the graphics a little here and there each time, but this sometimes meant the speed slowed a bit, too. It got to the point where, while it wasn't exactly so slow it would have come second in a sprint for the last seat on the bus with Mike McShane, it wasn't as blindingly fast as the sport should be. Now, however, it's not only very fast, but it looks absolutely brilliant.

It's the sports game with everything... it plays fast, looks brilliant and has loads of violence

Board stiff

Fans of untrammelled violence will be pleased to know that all the little touches of tuggery that caused such affection in the original game are back (along with a few more!). Cue loads of side incidents which, even in the midst of a tense match, provoke the type of cruel, cackling laughter normally associated with Sid James upon seeing Charles Hawtrey's head getting stuck in a toilet seat. You can skate into the umpires and smack them flat on their backs. You can whack an opponent hard into the plexiglass



screen that he crashes straight through it. Then, after play has stopped, you can dish out 'afters' by speed-skating into him with your stick held horizontally at throat height, thus rupturing his trachea and ensuring he never reaches the high

notes in *You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)* satisfactorily again. But best of all, probably thanks to a reference in *Swingers*, the fighting's back. Anger someone enough with cheap-shots and niggling and they'll start a punch up – and you can pummel each other about the head until one of you falls over.

◀ The players are huge (especially if you use the excellent close camera option, which moves to frame the action intelligently) and they're so well-detailed that many actually have the real players' faces mapped onto their heads. Eerie. They're also really well animated. The only sports game I've seen so far that manages this level of detail in its players is Konami's ISS64. In the same way, players here move about while they're waiting for the action to start, and react to the most bizarre and amusing situations (such as smacking the sides of the sin-bin when they're sent off!).

Oh, what an atmosphere!

NHL 98 is chocka with superb atmosphere. The narration is fluid, accurate and boasts extra "colour" commentary, which offers you a host of interesting or boring details (depending on your personal viewpoint), and even takes the piss out of the players. There are the usual tinny organ tunes, plus proper "pop music", specially licensed by EA for the game. It also helps that the crowd closely resembles the hysteria and riot of a real ice hockey crowd. If this doesn't do the business for you, just get a bunch of mates to stand behind you and shout a few 'oohs' and 'aahs' when something dramatic happens.

Chiselled features

New features for this version include an international championship – as well as having every club team in the States to play with, you get every international side, from Canada, Sweden and the USA themselves, to England and the other duffers. You could argue about some of the ratings (for example, both Sweden and Finland have been World Champions in recent years, and yet they're rated far lower than the USA). Then again, you could just ignore it. Oh, and if you are the type of person who has a hankering to get whopped, you can use the new Internet play mode to get onto EA's gaming site and play people much better than you with faster access times.

If you know the slightest thing about the tactical ins and outs of "hahkey", there are plenty of tactics which can be altered on-the-fly, as developed by Marc Crawford, coach of Stanley Cup holders Colorado Avalanche. If, like me, you wouldn't know a good ice hockey tactic if it skated up and ruptured your spleen, you can just forget all about it – the players still react intelligently.

Basically, NHL 98 is the sports game with everything: it's really well put together, plays fast and intuitively, looks brilliant and has shitloads of violence. Afficionados will appreciate the long-term appeal of indulging in season and playoff play, and trading players between teams; everyone else will just love the speed, full-on head-banging action and instant appeal. **7**

The Mask

One weird little option in the game is the facility to look at all the goalies' masks. They revolve, and zoom in and out and stuff. I'm not really sure what the point of it all is. Maybe it means something to Americans – perhaps certain goalies are renowned for their design abilities, and fans with an eye for pretty patterns clamour to see their work. Maybe Americans are just bleeding weird. Whatever the reason, this little pastime is about as fascinating as watching tortoises sleep, and means bugger all to me. What next? Footie games providing a chance to compare the patterns of the sticky-palmed bit on goalkeepers' gloves? Tennis games allowing you to check out the racquet grips of the stars? Beach volleyball games letting you check out the sweat-stains in the knick – (Let's stop there, shall we? – Ed.)



(Above) Bernard hated being a goalie. Every time the opposition charged down upon his goal, the fright made his knees turn to jelly and he would slump to the floor. The effect on his bowels also made him very unpopular with the ice-cleaners.

In Perspective

No other sports game comes close to providing the same combination of high quality graphics, high-speed play, and ease of use. Don't even think about looking at another ice hockey game. As far as games featuring other sports go, it's only golf games that reach these dizzy heights. It's superbly put together and presented. It's really quite good.

NHL 98

Other ice hockey games

Spec Sheet

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P80

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Gamepad (recommended), joystick, mouse, keyboard

Note: Windows 95 only



Score

The best arcade sports game on the PC

94

Price: £39.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Electronic Arts

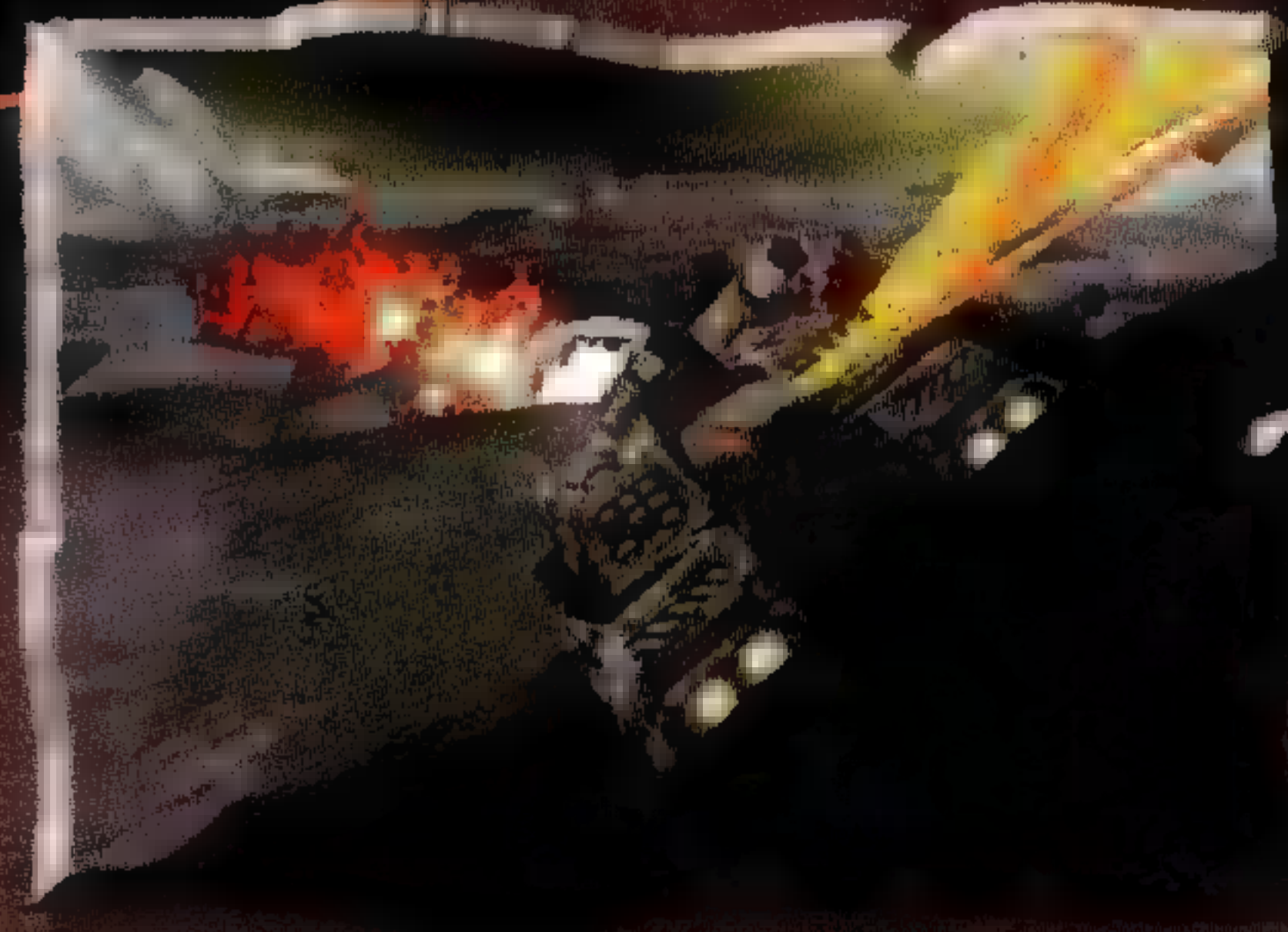
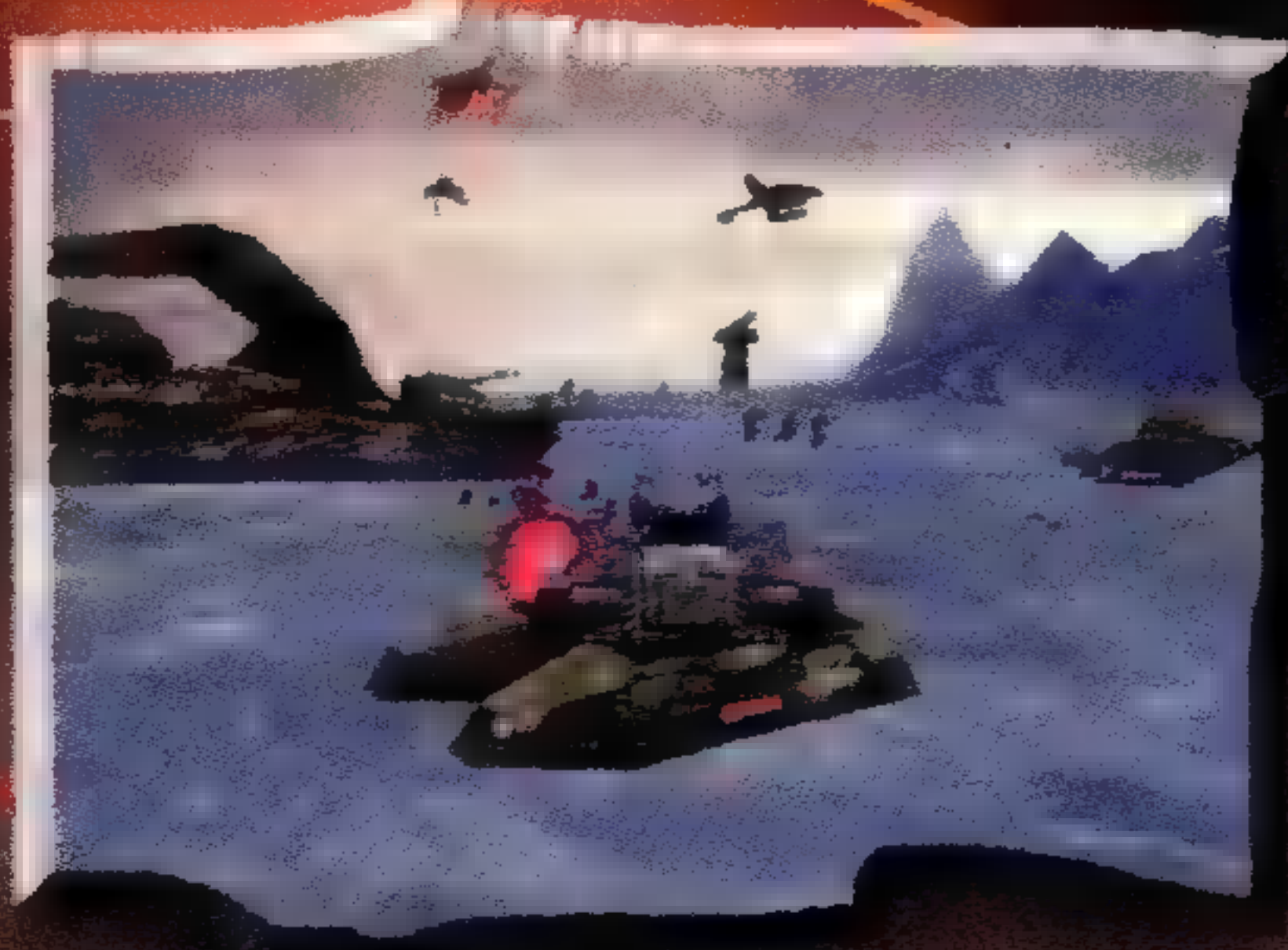
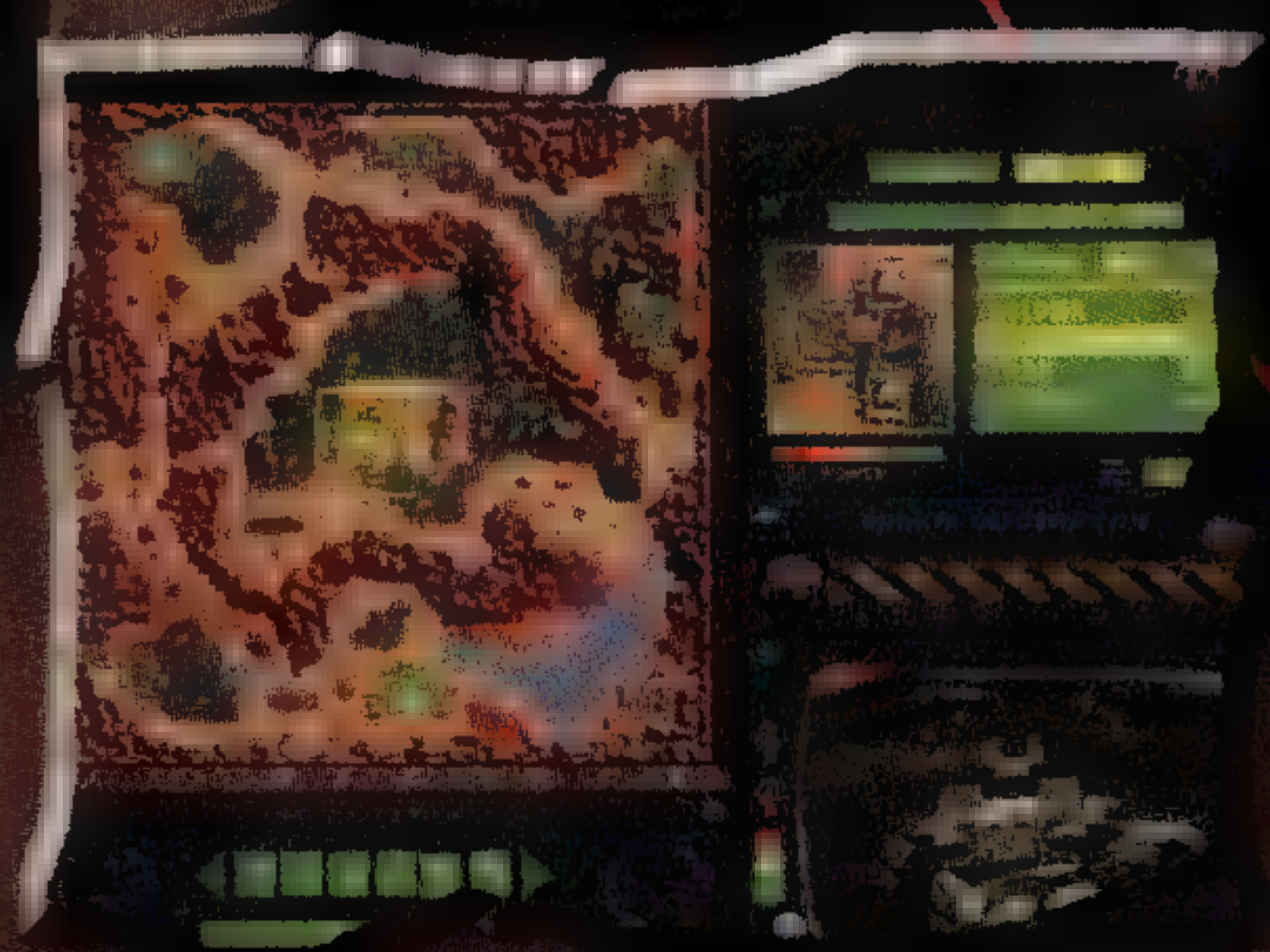
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Web site: www.ea.com

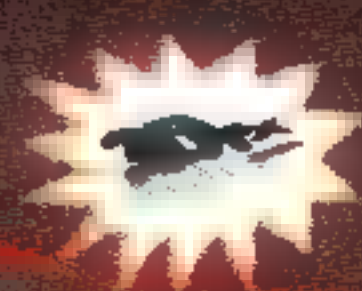
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**PC
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Mageslayer

During the Eighties, **Richie Shoemaker** played drums in a band called **Scarlet Chuff**. He was no **Cozy Powell**. He had square drum pads, wore a kilt and lost his left arm in a bizarre lawnmowing accident.

7

IT WAS A TIME OF WHITE SOCKS and burgundy loafers, leg warmers and PVC ties. The Eighties, the decade that fashion forgot. And then there was the music! All that plinky-plonk synth-pop, and the big-haired, soft rock ballads of Bonnie 'blow-job' Tyler and Jennifer Rush! Maybe one day, when those memories are distant enough to pose no kind of threat, we will relive the whole debacle with great fondness. Well, you'd better be ready, cos' that day could already be upon us. Dig out that pin-striped sleeveless denim jacket - Raven are taking us back to the days when pastel coloured t-shirts were the height of fashion. Radical.

The creators of *Hexen* have taken their classic 3D action game, plied it with drinks and introduced it to *Gauntlet*, the best Eighties multi-player game around (apart from *Spin the Bottle*). The result is *Mageslayer*. Basically *Gauntlet* remixed. The question on my ample lips though is: is the product of Raven's gaming loins destined for great things, or will it eke out a lowly existence, languishing in bargain bins along high streets up and down the country?

You should already have an idea of the game's standing. By now you will have seen the score (unless you're one of those people who cover it up - in which case it's 73). But of course, you've paid good money, and as such will require more than a two figure analysis. A shame really because I'd love to go on about the Eighties forever. Oh well, here goes.

New life

Living in the shadow of great and successful parentage is never a good start for any child, but that's not to say that this mewling cabbage deserves to be put in a sack and thrown in the Thames. OK, so it hasn't been endowed with a great deal of intelligence, but then neither *Gauntlet* nor *Hexen* were big on brainpower. *Mageslayer's* focus is on action, so let's get the plot thing over with quickly shall we? The story revolves around collecting a number of relics and



Hammer time! Earth-Lord gets in close and personal, decorating the hall in shades of claret.



Wholesale slaughter is the order of the day. Roam, kill, pick, use and flick. It's like *Hexen* from above.

piecing them together in the hope that Lore Thane and his evil minions can be sent back from whence they came. The thirty or so levels are divided into five not-very-different worlds (sewers, temples etc), at the end of which you must kill the respective bosses, claim the relics and move on. As such, wholesale slaughter is the order of the day. Roam, kill, pick, use and flick. Yep, it's a bit like *Hexen*, only from above.

Everybody wants to rule the world

Like *Gauntlet* (and *Hexen*), *Mageslayer* offers you the chance to control four different characters, each with different strengths and cool special moves. Apart from keeping your health levels up, you'll need to collect moonstones that enable your character to keep the foe at bay with magic spells (which get progressively more lethal with each relic you collect). Each level is littered with power ups and special items that we've pretty much all seen before: invisibility potions, proximity mines and



(Above) Look closely and you might be able to pick out your little chap. (Right) Places to go, stuff to pick up.

speedy boots. Standard RPG fare.

But let's get back to those four characters; The Earth Lord is the hammer-wielding hero. Short legs and white beard characterise his dwarven ancestry. His weapon of choice is a supply of electro-mallets. The Inquisitor is the mysterious lady of the bunch who, in a spot of bother, will happily summon a couple of shadowy ghosts to suck the life out of anyone nearby - rather like that bit at the end of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The Arch-Demon is the ugliest of the bunch and the weedy Warlock is your number four.

There is no significant difference between the characters you get to control. They each have a different speed and armour level, but the difference in firepower seems purely cosmetic. I preferred to control the Arch-Demon, as it was easier to distinguish which way he was facing. A useful factor when dashing around dungeons.

The levels look gorgeous, especially with 3D acceleration, but unfortunately you don't really get to explore very much. The game would rather you just move along and twat stuff. There are some choice obstacles, like giant mallets and revolving cogs, (oh, and the obligatory switches tucked away to extend bridges), but it would have been nice to have seen a little more imagination in the way the levels were constructed. Of course each level has its fair share of evil entities. Unfortunately they are all quite stupid and are happy to run into certain death, thus showering the rooms with gore. Here is where I shall level my main criticism.

Confusion

It's not the showering goo that detracts from the gameplay. Far from it. But there are so many enemies crowding around you that it very quickly becomes hard to distinguish which way your character is facing. Maybe I need specs, but for the first couple of hours, even when not engaged in a bit

of hand-to-hand, I was walking into walls and bouncing off corners like nobody's business. To be honest, after a few hours play you do get the hang of it, but so often my little chap was chipping away at a wall, whilst gleeful nasties spooned out my kidneys. There is a key that allows you to zoom into the action, which does help matters, but you can't play the whole game from such an enclosed perspective, and the last thing you want to do in the heat of battle is start pressing more keys. Raven should've implemented an automatic zoom feature for when things get a bit crowded. The camera in the forthcoming *GTA* zooms in and out, depending on how fast you're travelling, and as a result the whole thing's a lot more fluid. Had *Mageslayer* included this feature, it would have made things a lot clearer in the heat of battle. It might have lessened the feeling of being alienated from the action, too.

Tainted Love

After last month's disappointing *Take No Prisoners*, I initially didn't hold out much hope for *Mageslayer*. After all, it's just another perspective, and not a particularly exciting one at that. At least *TNP's* view on the world was different, even if it did piss people off. After about four hours whining, I finally succumbed to its charms. It is fun and after all, that's all it wants to be, although the fact that you can't play two or even four players on one split-screen is a massive faux pas. Anyone who's played a *Gauntlet* conversion or even *Alien Breed* will appreciate just how important that is to a game like this. A *Gauntlet* for the Nineties maybe? It's just that things have moved on so much that *Gauntlet* doesn't really belong in the Nineties. **Z**

We are family

A great multi-player game does not a great single-player game make. Let's face it, Billy Nomates isn't particularly well served by either *Gauntlet* or *Quake*. After a few levels things get pretty dull very quickly. Raven have made *Mageslayer* a far better single player game than either of its ancestors. It's not great though; it has to be said it's a bit easy - fast reactions are not necessary, just a hardy fire button. If you're lucky enough to be linked to other players, Raven have incorporated all the usual multi-player options. A split screen mode would have been most welcome, but alas you'll have to play on your lonesome if you've only got the one PC, and let's face it, that's almost everybody.



(Above) The Ratlord welcomes you with open arms.

In Perspective

If you loved *Gauntlet* and you don't mind it being dragged kicking and screaming into the post-*Quake* era, you should snap this up. Really though, it should've been left alone. *Mageslayer* is good fun for a little while, but you'll soon be looking elsewhere.

Mageslayer

Gauntlet

Take No Prisoners

Quake, Hexen et al

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P75

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Keyboard, mouse

Notes: 105Mb Hard Drive space required



Score

Hexen from above. But WHY?

73

Price: £39.99

Release date: November

Publisher: GT Interactive

Telephone: 0171 258 3791

Website: www.gtinteractive.com

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what

increases heart rate

increases blood pressure

increases sensory perception?

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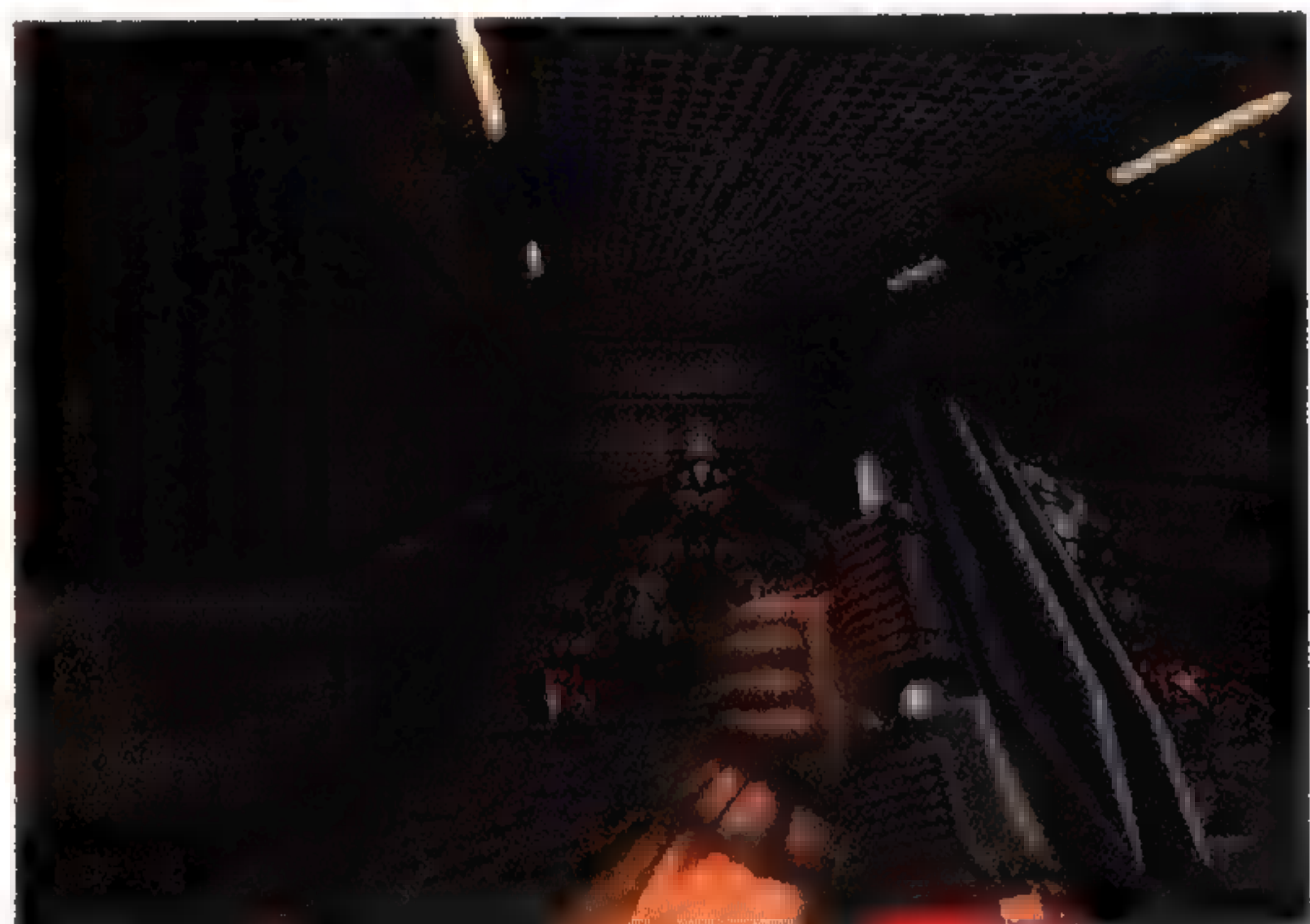
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adrenalin in its purest form.

Chasm

The Rift



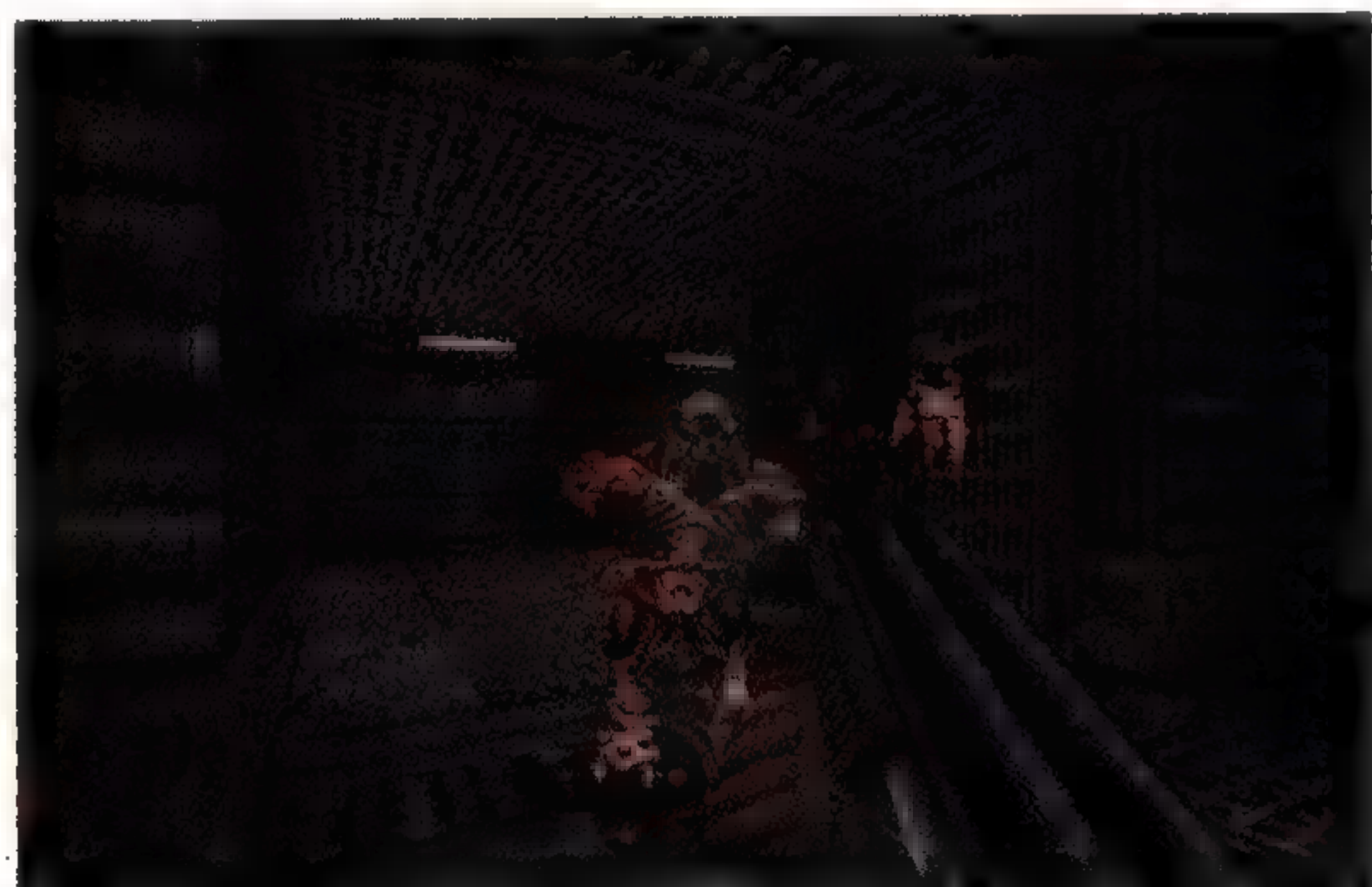
Obviously there aren't enough 3D shoot 'em ups in the world, which is why Digital Integration are forcing yet another one upon us, (which we in turn are forcing upon Chris Anderson).



THE DEVELOPERS OF CHASM: THE RIFT are said to be making claims that their game is better than Quake. It's on that premise then, that I'm going to judge the game, so by the end of this review you'll all know if Chasm is indeed better than Quake. Where shall we start then? Let's check out the graphics, shall we?

Graphics

Considering that *Quake* already has a patch for OpenGL (and very nice it looks too), it came as a bit of a surprise to discover *Chasm* currently has no accelerator support whatsoever, although a 3Dfx patch is said to be in the pipeline. I'll just have to imagine what it will look like under 3Dfx then. Er, the graphics aren't quite as dull as *Quake*'s, but they're not far off. Dark and dreary rooms are generally the order of the day, but at least there are some open environments to play around in. So let's call it a draw on the graphics front (assuming the 3Dfx patch shows up).



Level design

The levels in *Chasm* don't differ too greatly from those in every other *Quake* clone you may have played in the past. But then you could probably say that about *Quake* too. The big disappointment here is that there aren't any real surprises (unlike *Shadow Warrior*, which has them in spades). Let's call it another draw then.

Gameplay

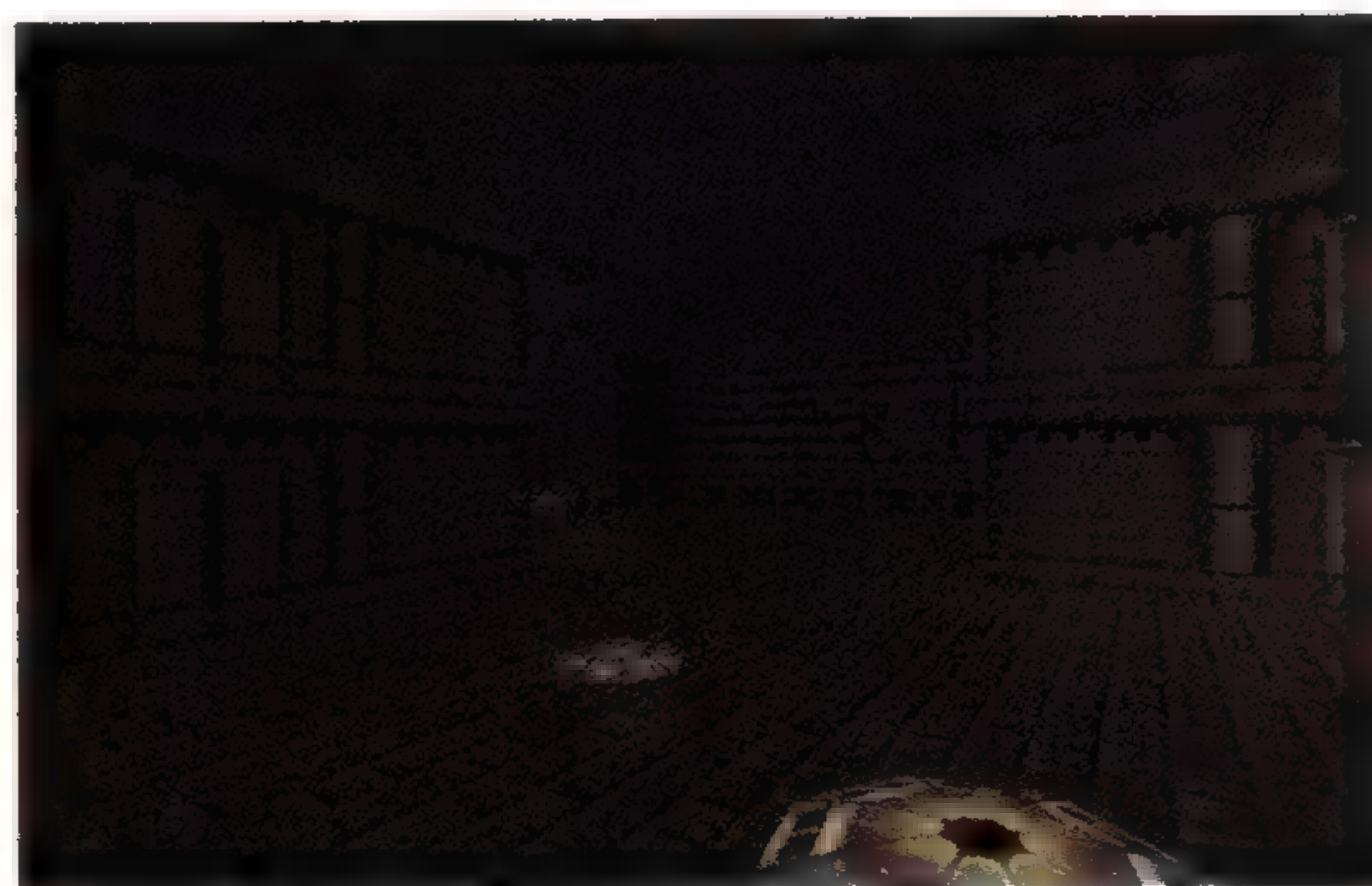
Where *Quake* has some genuinely scary moments, *Chasm* has some genuinely snory moments. Think of the first time you were chased around a dark room by a Shambler in *Quake*. Now think about the heart attack you almost suffered as a result, quivering in your seat afraid to look up again at the screen. It's no secret that single-player *Quake* will win no awards for exciting gameplay, but at least it has its moments, which is more than can be said for *Chasm*. One up for *Quake*, then.

Originality

Don't make me laugh. When was the last time you saw a *Quake* or *Doom* clone and thought, 'blimey, this is really different'? It's just not going to happen, is it? Well, *Duke Nukem* at least tried I suppose. Having said that, while *Quake* is not the most original take on the genre you're likely to see, *Chasm* offers absolutely nothing new to a massively over-crowded sector of the games market. *Quake* triumphs a second time, then.

In summary

There are a few things to take into consideration here. To start with, *Quake* was released about a year ago and was pretty damn good for its time. If nothing else, *Quake*'s game-engine was generally considered to be revolutionary and, don't forget, it paved the way for games like *Daikatana*. *Chasm*, on the other hand, has turned up a year later and won't really impress anyone who's played the hundreds of clones which preceded it. Considering that *Daikatana*, *Half-Life* and *Quake 2* are almost upon us, do we really need a game like this? I think not. **Z**



(Above left) The only noticeably neat thing about *Chasm* is you can blow specific bits off your enemies. (Right) That red thing on the floor is about to explode and make an awful mess.

In Perspective

Chasm isn't going to worry the current batch of 3D shooters very much. *Shadow Warrior* is a much better game. The levels are more exciting and the graphics are better (despite the fact *Shadow Warrior* uses the build engine and *Chasm* has its own engine, which they seem to think is better than *Quake*'s). *Blood* is a safer bet than *Chasm* for all the same reasons. Basically, if you're going to buy a 3D shooter to keep you occupied until *Daikatana* and *Half-Life* show up, make sure it isn't *Chasm*.

Quake

Duke Nukem 3D

Shadow Warrior

Blood

Chasm

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: 486 DX4100

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, keyboard



Score

Better than *Quake*? Er, no.

65

Price: £ 29.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Digital Integration

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Website: www.digit.co.uk

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Red Alert: The Aftermath



Warren Christmas becomes, er, 'alerted' to a few ominous gaps in Westwood Studios' new stopgap.



WITH THE RELEASE OF COMMAND & CONQUER 2: TIBERIAN SUN still months off (next Summer, if you're lucky), this Red Alert mission disc is essentially just a stopgap release from Westwood Studios' action-strategy department. Or 'yet another' stop-gap release. For as you may well remember, we've already seen one mission disc in the form of Counterstrike.

Actually, come to think of it, wasn't Red Alert itself something of a stopgap too? It may have introduced a different storyline, new units and buildings, hi-res graphics and so on, but it was still Command & Conquer underneath wasn't it? And let's not forget that Westwood released a mission disc (*The Covert Operations*) for Command & Conquer too. If you've bought the lot, you may well have already spent over £100 on what is essentially one game (albeit a very good one).

So is it worth spending yet another £15? Probably not, to be honest. Just like *Counterstrike*, *The Aftermath* offers 18 new missions (plus 100-odd new multi-player maps), but once again there's no on-going campaigns, no new cut-scenes and, most disappointing of all, the missions are still merely variations of what are by now very, very familiar themes: Get a spy into base, take on the enemy



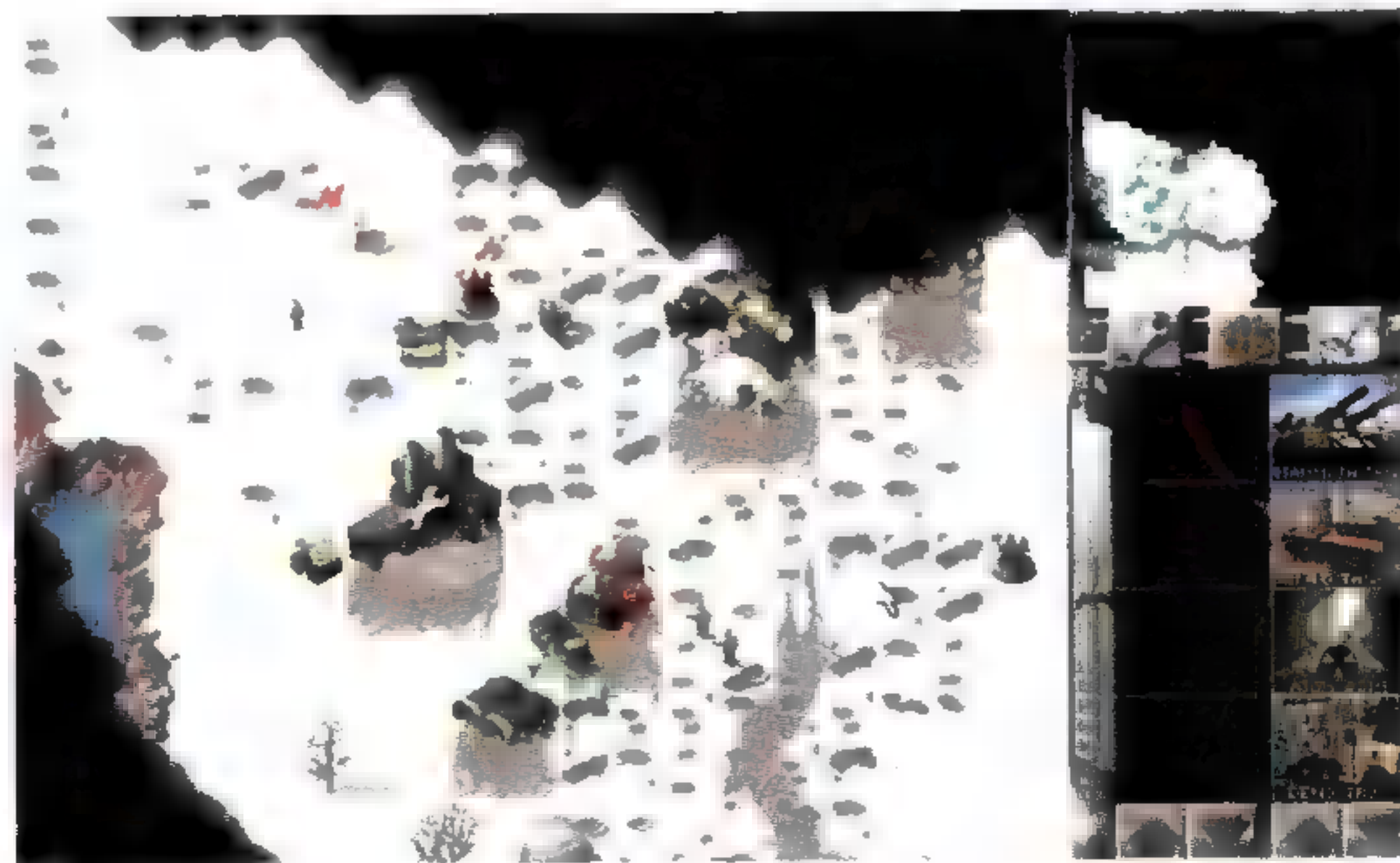
(Left) Whaddya mean it looks just like Red Alert? There is three new units near the centre of the screen: a Demolition Truck, a ChronoTruck and a Mechanic. (Right) Up for some serious eight-player action? Then the new extra large (126x126 grid) maps could come in handy. They're f**king HUGE.

with one unit, defend a pre-built base, rescue captives, destroy radar sites...you've seen it all before.

There are, however, seven smart new toys in the cupboard, including demolition trucks (atomic bombs on wheels), field mechanics (roving medics for vehicle repairs), shock troopers (soldiers armed with portable tesla coils) and MAD Tanks (which send out harmonic shock waves, damaging everything within a screen's radius).

These additional units can be used in multi-player matches (provided each player has a copy of the disc), and this alone puts *The Aftermath* ahead of *Counterstrike* (where, to the annoyance of many punters, this option wasn't available). The repercussions are too complex to go into here, but the new units have a huge effect on tactics, giving the player numerous new attacking options and causing even more defensive headaches. Hell, it's almost like having a whole new game! Kind of.

It's a predictable summary, I know, but *The Aftermath* is only going to appeal to die-hard Red Alert fans. And even then, only really to those who play it against others on a semi-regular basis. If you're anything like us, though, you will have moved on to something new by now, such as Cavedog's *Total Annihilation*. By the way, Cavedog are providing free unit upgrades via their website. **Z**



The Nuclear-armed Demolition Trucks are good for a laugh. Hint: It is a good idea to get them out of your base as soon as they've been built. No, really.

The Perspective

Command & Conquer was good. Red Alert was even better, but the mission disks in the series have merely recycled the same ingredients. Fine to a point, but there are much better action strategy titles around now, with the likes of *Total Annihilation* and *Dark Reign*.

So we'd advise you to try something new, if you haven't done so already.

Total Annihilation

Dark Reign

Red Alert

Red Alert: Counterstrike

Red Alert: The Aftermath

Tech Specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX2-66

Graphics: VGA (DOS), SVGA (WIN95)

Sound: All major sound cards

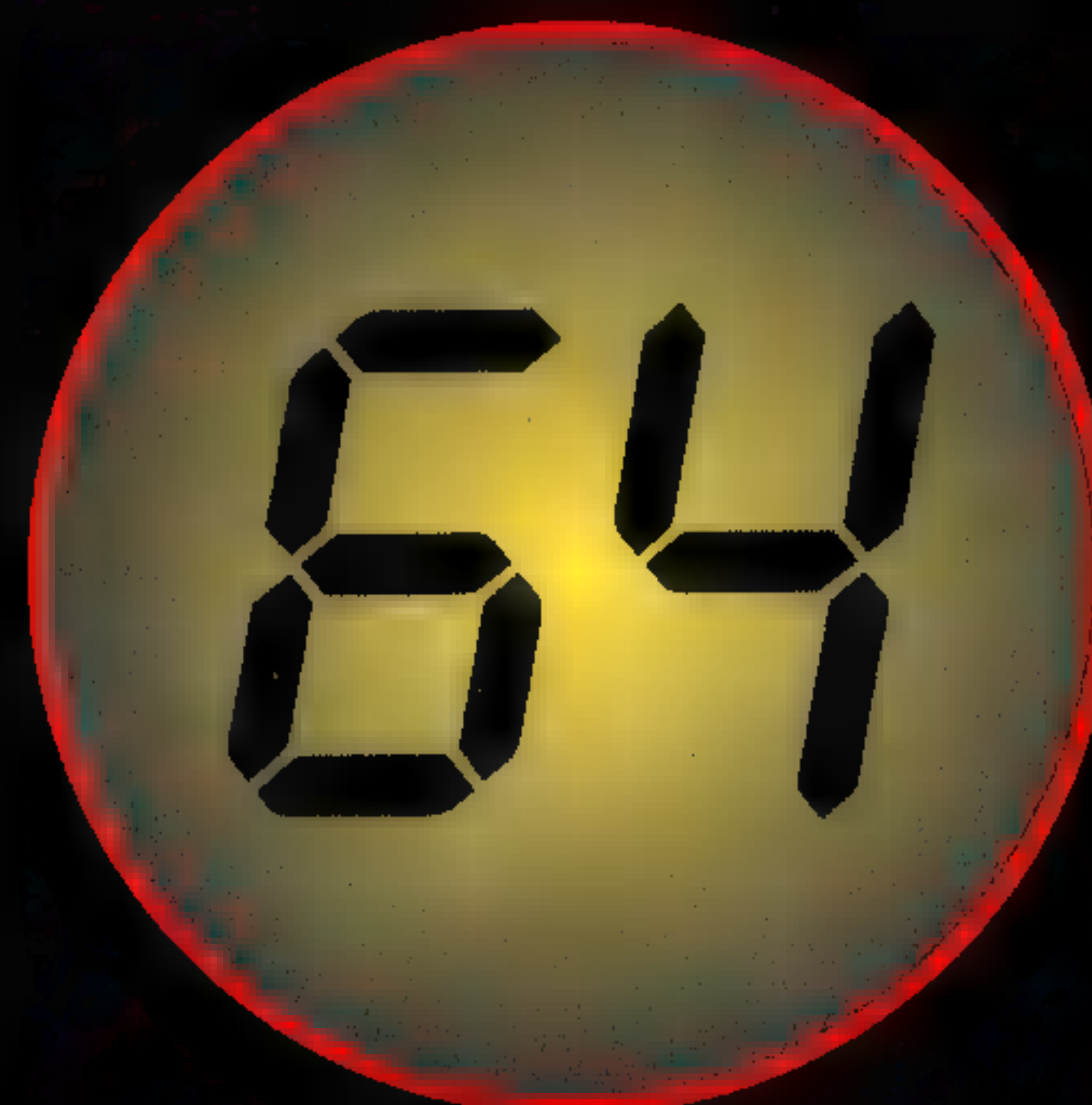
Controls: Mouse with keyboard

Note: Original Command and Conquer Red Alert game required.



Score

Too little too late to try this sort of thing again.



Price: £14.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Virgin Interactive

Telephone: 0171 368 2255

Website: www.vie.co.uk

NHL 98 anyone?

What, you may well ask, has *NHL Hockey 98* (reviewed on page 85) got to do with *Red Alert*? A good point actually, and one which has, no doubt, been raised at a certain CD duplicating plant. You see, several of the first batch of *Aftermath* discs in the UK (as many as 50%, we understand), actually contained Electronic Arts' top new sports sim (worth £40). What should you do if you get one of these 'faulty' discs? Take it back to the shop, of course. What you likely to do? Well, that's a different matter.

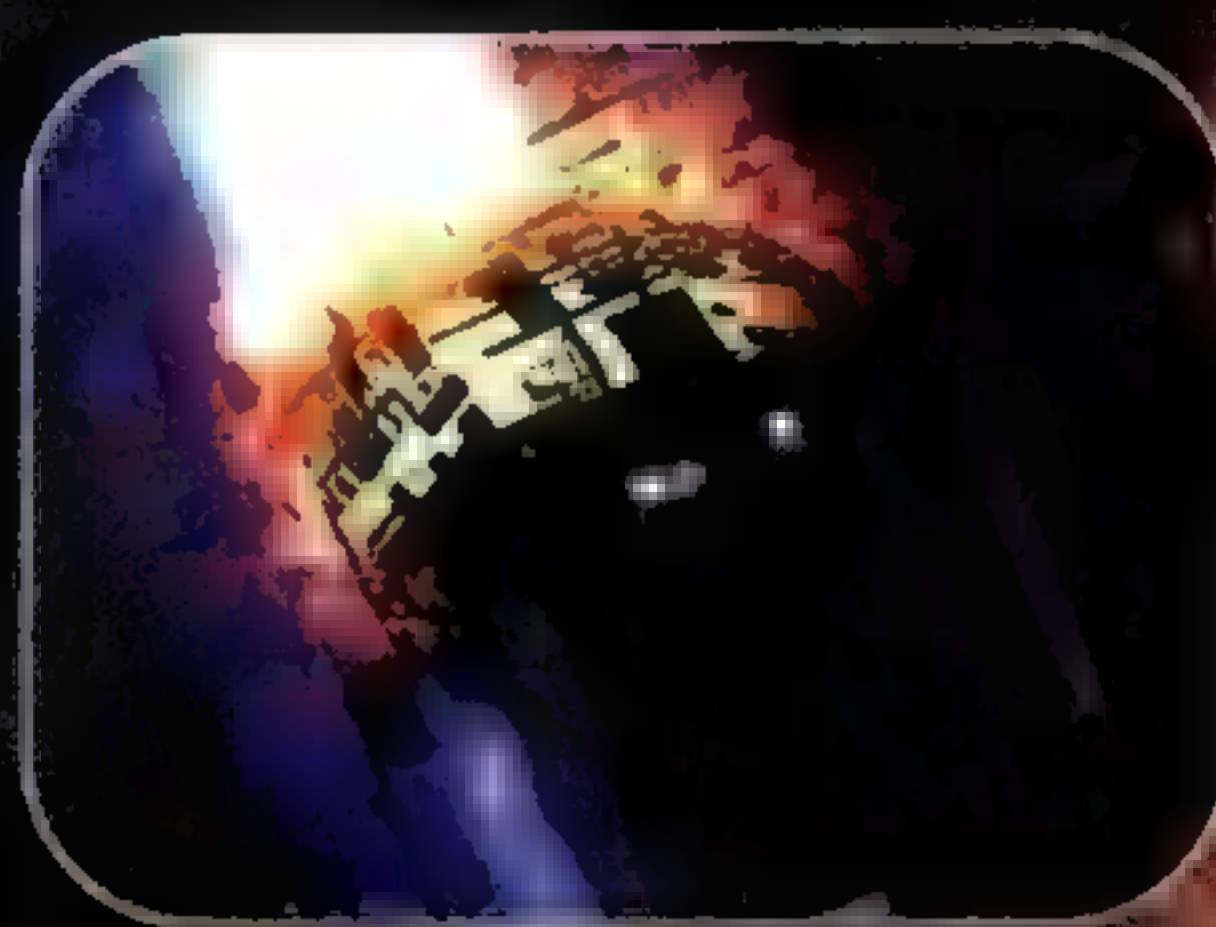
Who's the DEADLIEST of them all?

"Blizzard are not settling for Warcraft in space...with Starcraft they're aiming for a truly stellar game."

PC Gamer

"...Starcraft will represent a benchmark in real-time strategy games."

PC Zone



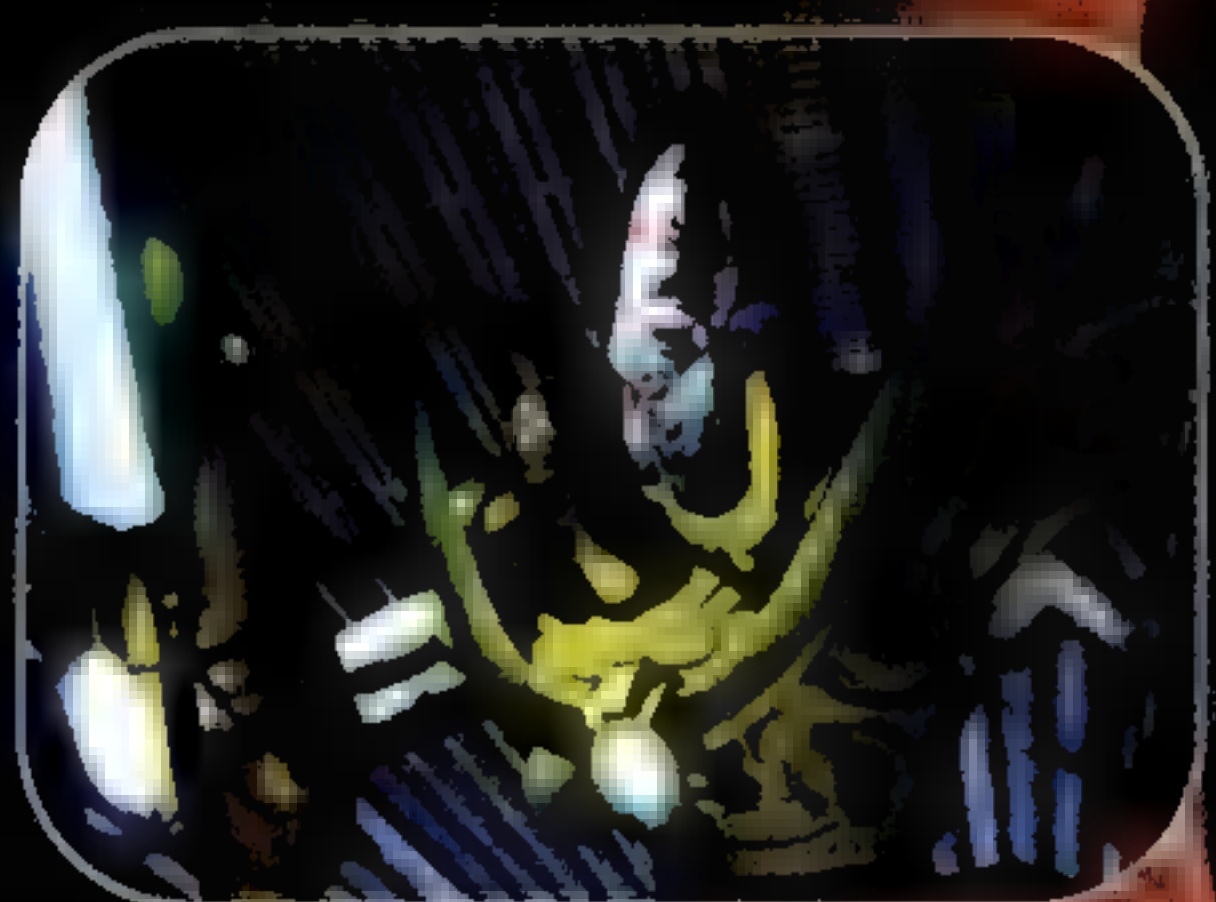
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3 Theatres of Battle

A deadly mix of space combat, planetary assault and covert base infiltration



3 Alien Races

Command any of three alien races - each boasting a unique set of skills and abilities



Screamer Rally

While doing his driving test, **Patrick McCarthy** rolled a car onto its roof trying to parallel park. Who better, then, to take you through that most demanding representation of motor-vehicular activities, the rally game?



SCREAMER RALLY, UNLIKE PREVIOUS versions in the Screamer series, is based entirely around rallying. Some people really seem to know what they're doing when it comes to nomenclature, don't they? But although it's a rally game, complete with all the sideways-corning, scenery-battering thrills the name promises, it's still very much an arcade game. It's just that this time you're breaking the speed limit down small country lanes instead of down Tooting High Road (or wherever the previous versions were supposed to be set). In other words, it's laps all the way. But at least they haven't put those terrible time limits on the courses. This means that, unlike in previous versions, all you wild things out there can turn round and hammer the hell out of everyone by driving the wrong way round the tracks.

Drive on, and on, and on

This game has more in-built longevity than Cliff Richard's sperm. Alongside the three levels of difficulty and the expected one-off Arcade and Championship modes, you get the chance to participate in time trials against ghost cars of your best times. The game also offers a six-player network



(Above) Ah, Tuscany. I think I'll just race down a quiet back-lane at a ridiculously fast speed in the hope of colliding with a black-dressed old crone. (Above right) Wales: stark, majestic. And strangely sheepless.



(Above) It's a pain in the arse when your door handle gets caught on someone else's wing mirror. (Right) If you switch to an in-car view, some of the other drivers sulk.



You now have as much chance as your computer-controlled opponents of ramming someone off-line.

game and a split-screen mode. You want more? Alright, once you triumph on all the courses, win on the bonus courses, find the bonus cars, win the championship at the hardest level and get all your times down to the limits that human hand-eye co-ordination will allow, there's a mirror mode: all the courses are reversed. In other words, every arcade racing feature known to man is included in the game.

Details, details...

Championship and time trials allow you to save up to four different car set-ups. It's fairly basic stuff: adjustments can be made to the handling; the braking can be toggled between anything from slight-whiplash effect to nose-shaped-dents-in-the-dashboard effect; tyre pressure and type can be adjusted (although tyres can only be "dry", "wet" or "snow"), and so on. To be honest, I found it hard to feel the difference between the settings I chose, but at least the options are there for driving-purist types.

Championship mode has you racing the four easiest tracks in sequence initially, and once you've won that, plunges you into different tracks to increase the difficulty level. (This operates in addition to the game difficulty settings). Unusually, you're allowed to choose different cars for different legs of the championship. How your computer-controlled rivals feel about this is not known. The races





(Above) In Canada it's traditional to pull out in front of someone without signalling. (Right) "Look out!" cried Neville, "A hooligan element in the crowd throwing candy-floss at us!"

are handled really nicely: CPU-controlled cars make mistakes (especially at the easiest difficulty setting) and continue to race after you finish (so you don't see the finishing order as soon as you cross the line). The AI ensures that there's proper racing going on, that some cars are left behind, and so on. What's more, it doesn't engineer it so that your main rival wins all the races you don't. And those who felt hard done by in previous versions, when they always came off second best in collisions with computer-controlled opponents, will be happy to hear that this has been remedied: you now have as much chance as they do of ramming someone off-line.

Love at third sight

I admit I wasn't particularly over the moon about the game when I first played it, having been put off by the second game in the series (I was hooked on the first one). Now I have to admit that this one has won me back. The more I played it, the better it got. For a start, it looks absolutely superb. The cars look top notch, the backgrounds look amazing. Tyres don't just turn as you



steer, they spin as you accelerate and lock out as you brake; and there's stuff thrown up from the surface of the road (although the car shells aren't damaged by collisions). The sound is spot on - wheels crunch on snow, rumble on tarmac, and so on. The cars handle superbly - and differently on the different surfaces - and the tracks are outstanding and nicely varied. My favourite is Sweden, where there are huge hills to climb, ice and snow everywhere, hairpins on the crest of hills and steep slopes to race down. It's one of the best courses in any racing game around at the moment.

You're probably getting worried about those graphics. Well, there's hardware support for 3Dfx, Matrox Mystique and the 3D Blaster. As you'd expect, the game runs at a blinding speed on a 3Dfx-ed up P200. But even on my humble P90 (albeit also with a 3Dfx card) it still ran quickly on the highest detail settings. It got slightly jerky going through the canyon in the Arizona course, when the game was chucking huge canyon walls about, and sometimes when all the cars were on-screen it got a bit busy-looking. But otherwise there were no problems. So if you have the hardware, I advise you to go out and buy this game. It really is top stuff, and at this price it's a bit of a bargain, too. As a robber might say to his getaway driver, "get driving." **Z**

Another country

The courses are dotted all over the world. Among the places you'll visit (if you can call driving about sideways, smashing into everything around you a "visit") are China, Canada, Italy, Arizona, Sweden and (cough) Wales. There's also a Stadium-based course that looks like something out of *Super Mario Kart*. This is all very well, of course, but do they really look like the countries they purport to represent, eh? Eh? These people tell us these places are what they're supposed to be, but they would, wouldn't they? But what would someone from the country concerned have to say about it?

Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on your point of view) I live with a Welsh person (it was



aren't any. "There should be sheep. But those dark grey skies and wet fields could be North Wales. It's not too bad." There you have it. It's "not too bad." Obviously, some burning holiday homes and the odd bleeding French rugby player would have clinched it, but you can't have everything.

In Perspective

It looks good, "drives" quickly, and the tracks are lumpier. It's got a lower score than its predecessor, but it's a better game. But we can't keep giving out higher scores, or it'll get silly. Oh, and it runs in DOS.

Scream Rally

Micro Machines

Pool

The Need For Speed 2

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: Pentium

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

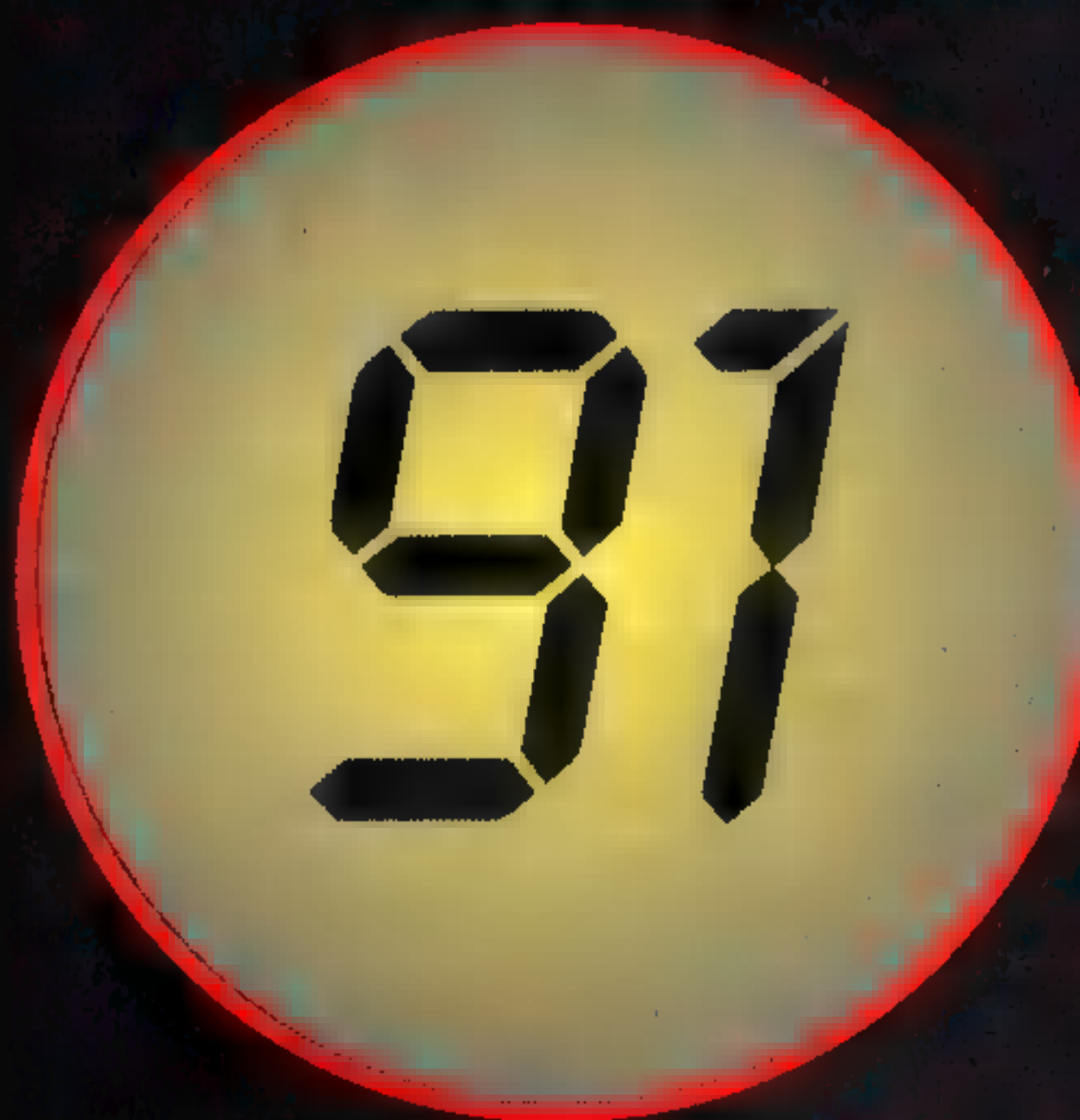
Controls: Keyboard, joystick, gamepad, wheel

Note: Split-screen option available



Score

It is better than last year's, but it's got a lower score. Isn't life complicated?



Price: £24.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Virgin Interactive

Telephone: 0171 368 2255

Web site: www.vie.com



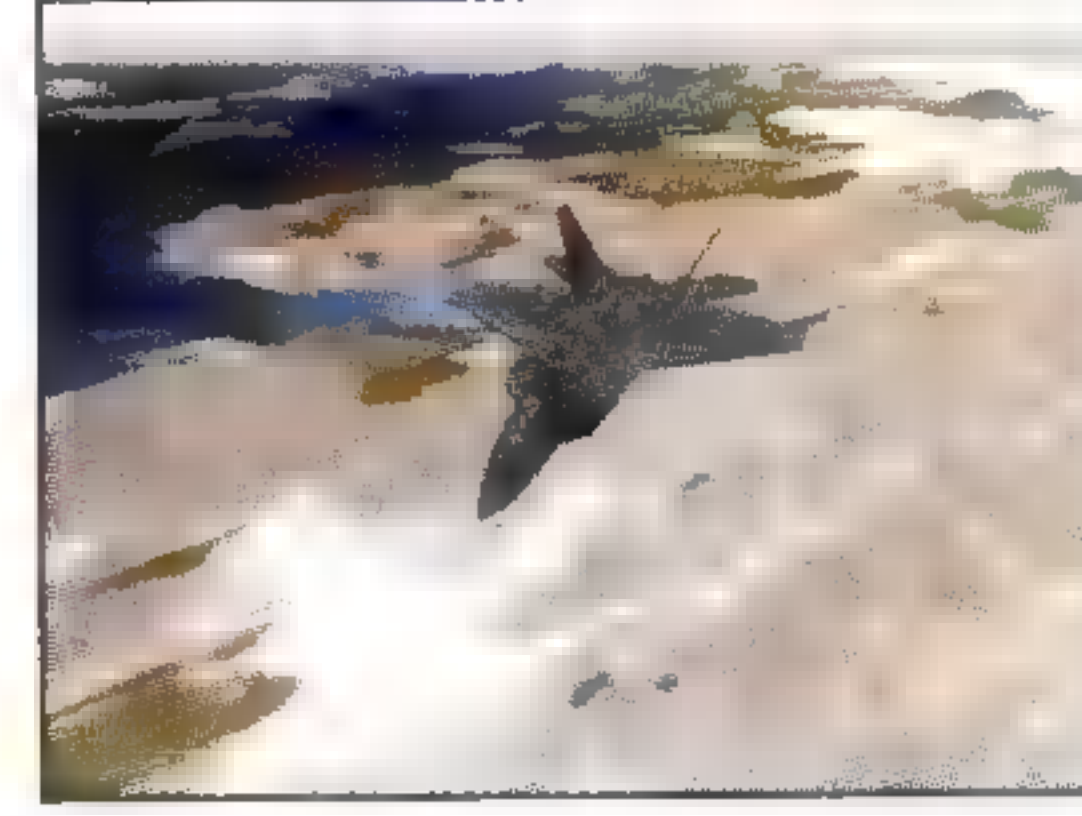
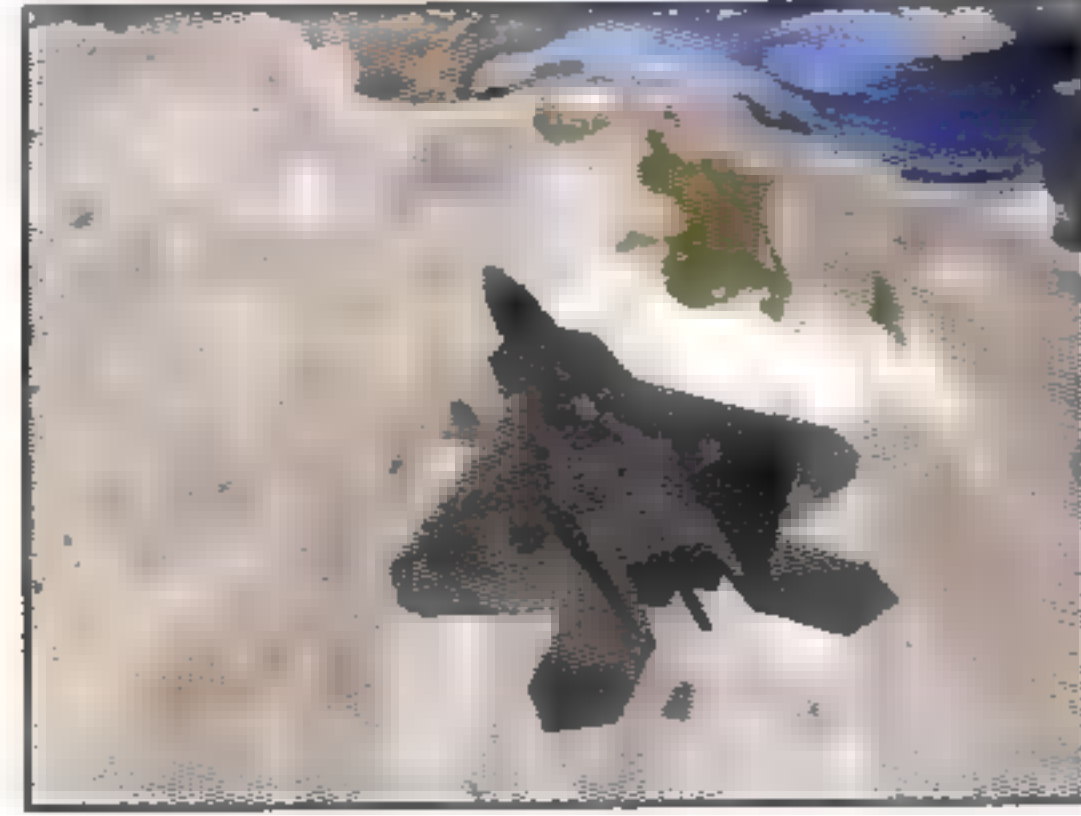
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Impedance	4ohms
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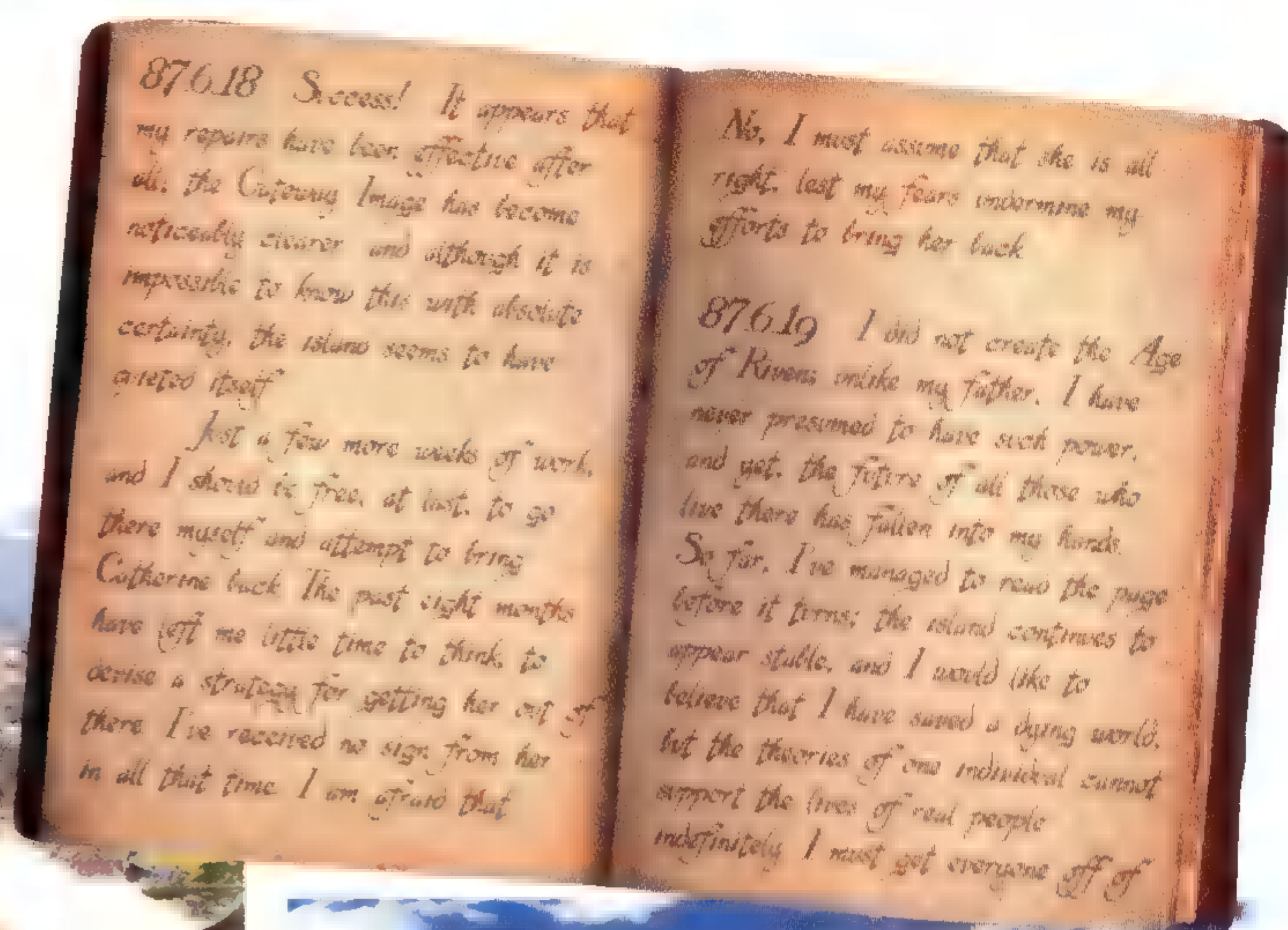
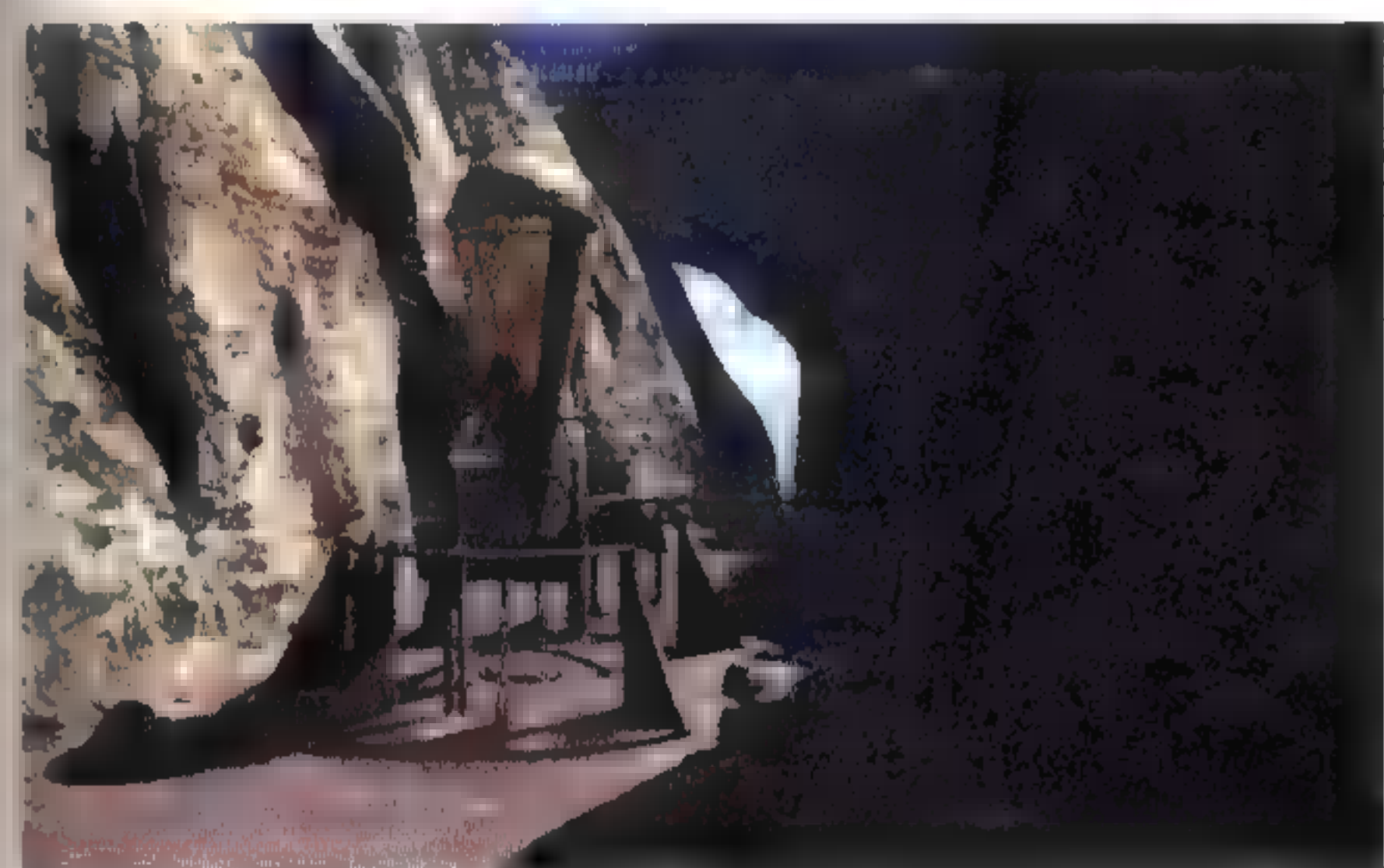
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Riven



(Above) I bet David Hasslehoff never had to deal with anything like this. (Above right) What happens when you let Alton Towers design your public transport system.

"A world o' mystery, beauty and style/To journey through and hear its tale/Myst respawns and sings anew/But I'd rather drink of ale."
(Paul Presley wrote this during National Poetry Day, bless his cotton socks).



QUANTUM THERMO-DYNAMICS AND their relation to inverse spatial co-ordination. The internal workings of the feline digestive system. Jim Davidson's continual presence on British television. *Myst* selling over 3.5 million copies world-wide. There are many things in this crazy old world that I simply don't understand, and the bowel-inflating success of Cyan's beauteous adventure game is perhaps the one that plays on my mind the most during the long winter nights when Mellors refuses to join in my games of *Hunt The Thimble*.

As best as my limited intellect could tell, *Myst* was an interactive photo-album masquerading under the guise of a 'game'. A collection of high-quality stills with the occasional brain teaser thrown in for good measure. A digital siren, luring in games players with her seductive visuals, before dashing them against the rocky shoals of misery.

In truth, I think its prosperity owes a lot to the non games-playing type; artists who were thankful to see a game appear that actually worked on their Macintosh computers; office workers who needed something to while away boring lunch hours; Daily Mail readers who were

shocked to find a game that didn't fit into their stereotypical ideals of youth-corrupting, Satan-worshipping, crime-encouraging, paedophile-supporting 'Hell Boxes'. In short, anyone *but* the average games-player. Believe me, I've asked around. It's like the Spice Girls album. It sold through the roof and yet no one admits to liking it.

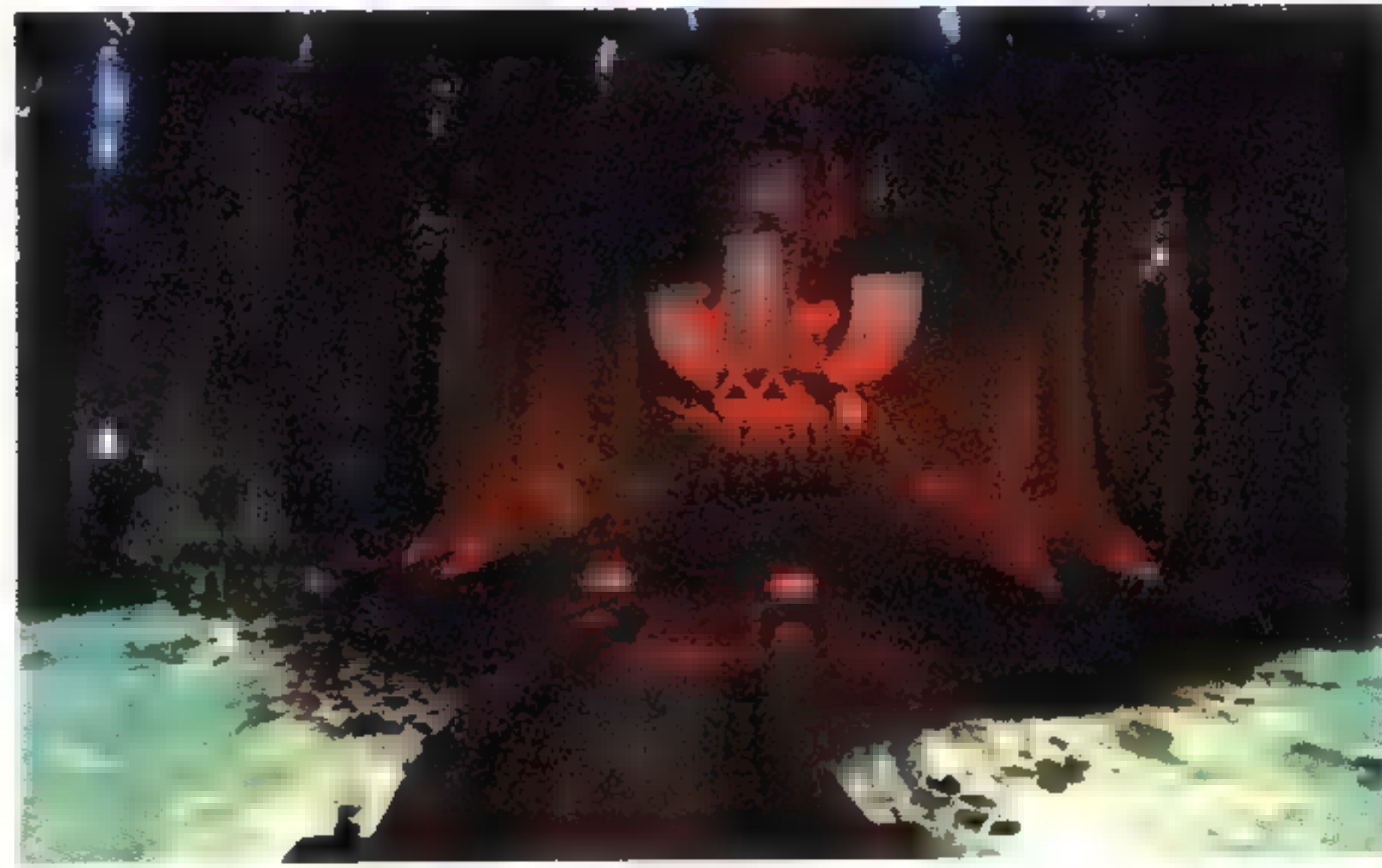
You know there's something going on, but you'll be buggered if you can work out what it is.

Caveat empor

So it was armed with a healthy level of cynicism that I approached this sequel. I'd read all those *Wired* articles and fawning preview pieces in US mags about how 'captivating' and 'hypnotic' *Riven* was going to be. How, once I'd started, I would forever become encapsulated in the beauty and majesty of this fantastical world. How my life would forever



(Above) I always knew there was a fifth Beatle. (Left) Unlike *Myst*, *Riven* actually contains people!



(Above) I don't know what it is or what it does, just don't anger it. (Left) I know, they look like giant testicles. But everyone has to live somewhere, right?

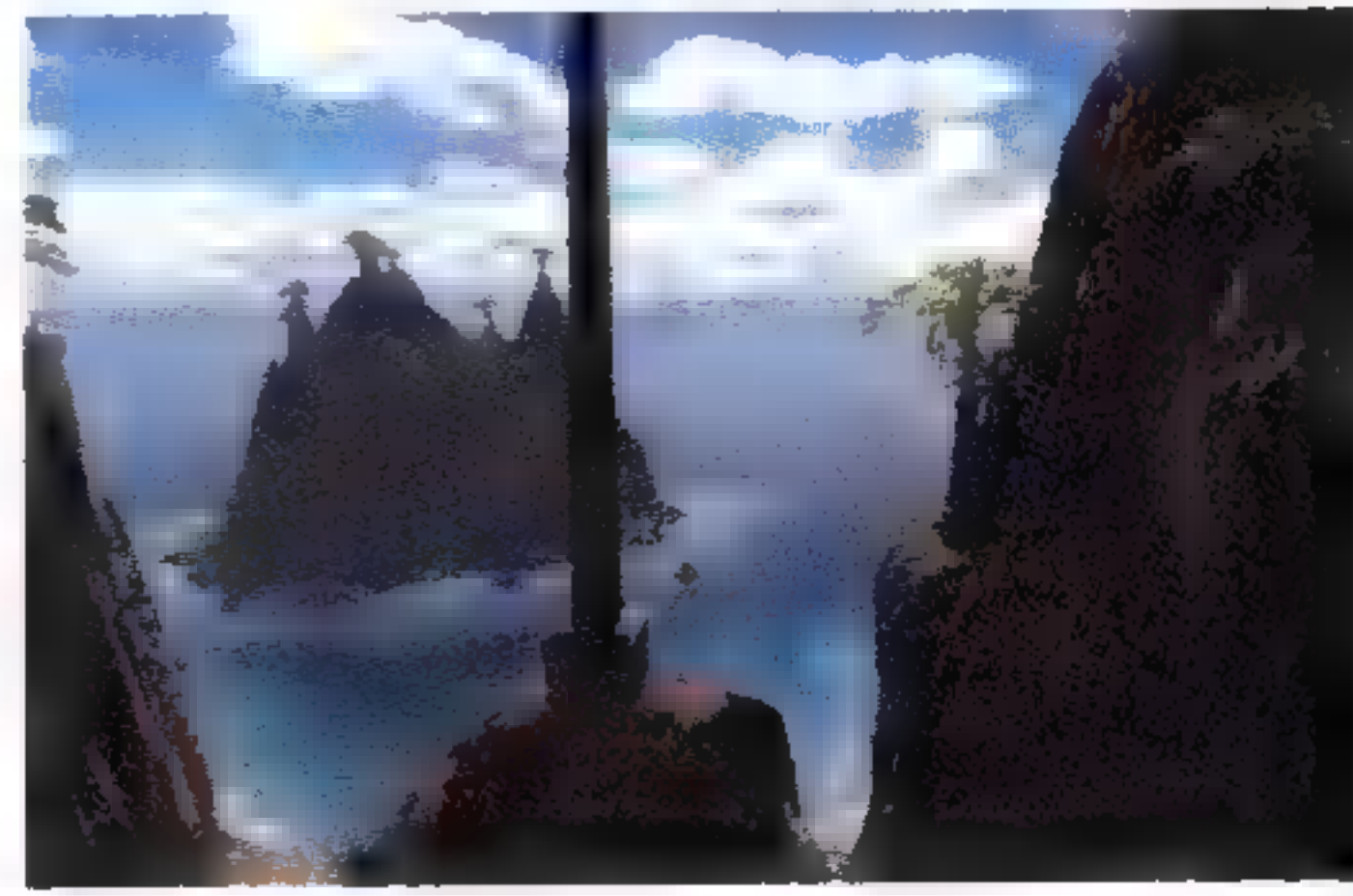
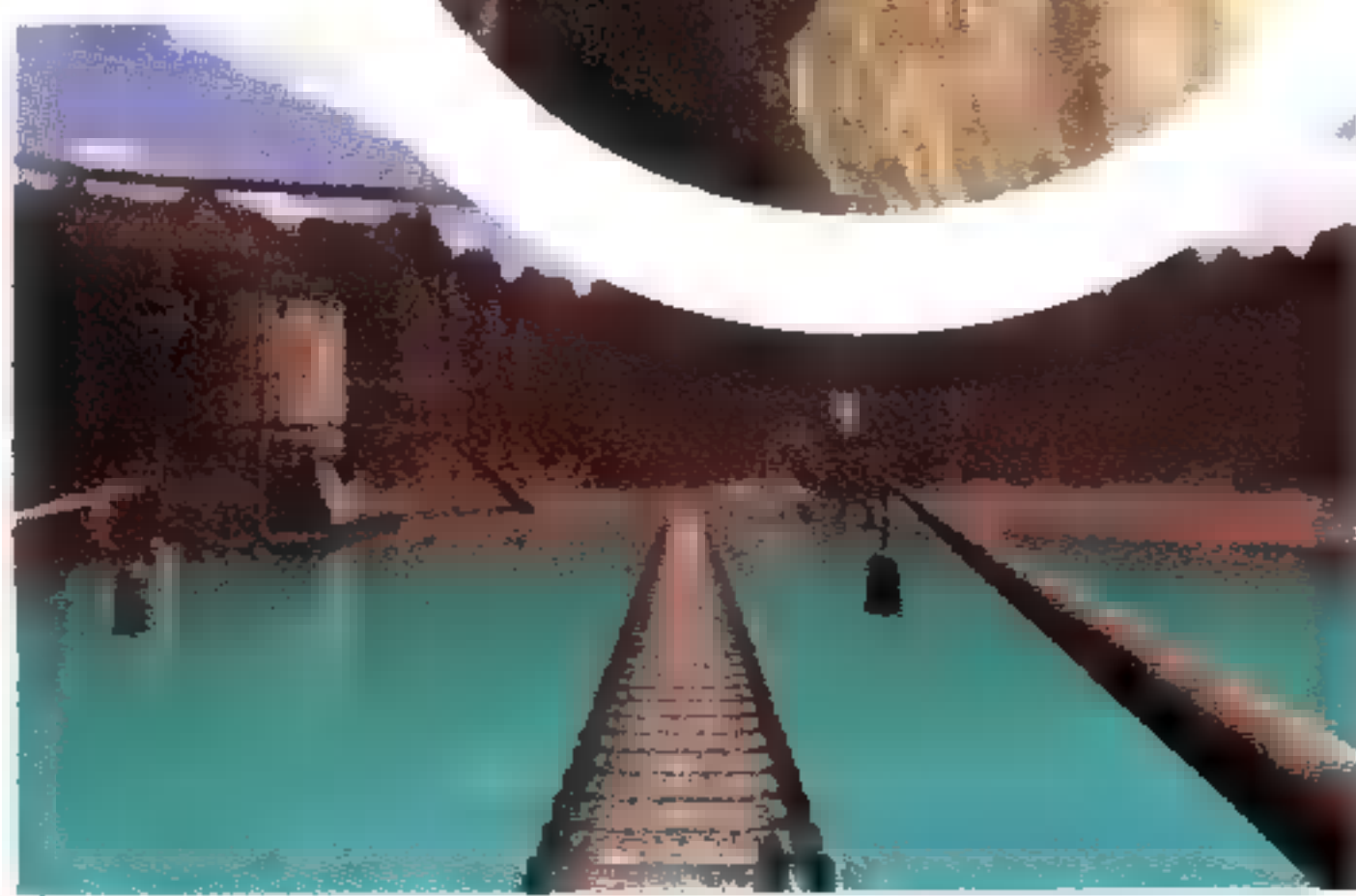
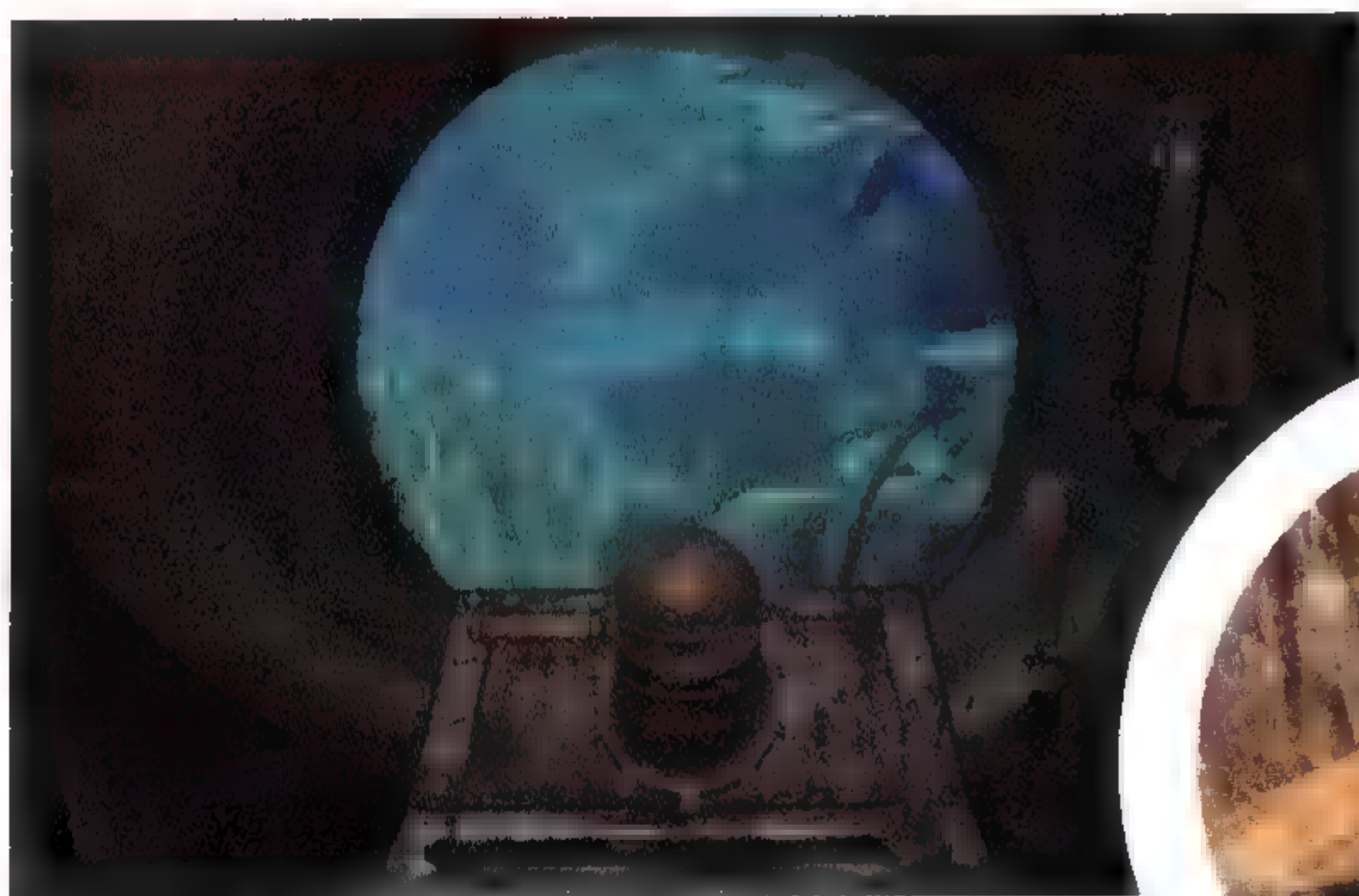
be altered by the mesmerising power of patiently clicking from one pre-rendered KPT Bryce landscape to another (most of us call it sleep-induced boredom). And so I entered ready to dislike the game, challenging it to beat away my pre-conceived notions, urging it to win me over.

The depressing news is that it did. Sort of. As I write this, I *have*, in a way, been captured. I *do* kind of appreciate it. I (gulp) *did* actually quite like it. Sorry. I feel as though I've let you people down.

Alluring and beautiful?

Let me set out a few ground rules here and now, though. If 'your bag' is all-action *Quake*athons, high-speed gaming at the edge of adrenalineville, then leave now. If, however, you have a superior mind, a willingness to think, to ponder, to appreciate, then you, as I, may just find yourself wanting to take more than a cursory look...

...As you will if you played and enjoyed *Myst*. *Riven*, quite simply, is more of the same. The plot, as best I can tell, centres around some bloke trying to rescue an island world from his father's evil schemes, while rescuing his beloved lady. Except that bloke doesn't actually live in the same, um, 'dimension' as the island world (*Riven*). No, he has to travel there via, er, a book. But, uh, for some reason he can't actually go to *Riven* himself, so he sends you. It seems to make more sense when you read the interminably long-winded on-screen novella. You know, I hate dull FMV sequences as much as the next man, but there are times when they can and should be used.



(Top) *Riven* takes place over a series of islands. What better transportation then than a personal submarine? (Above left) Why am I reminded of the Science Museum? (Special Londoners-only joke.)

Sounds exciting

Doesn't it just. To be honest, the closest non-*Myst* comparison would be *Zork Nemesis*. Essentially you have a whole world mapped out in pre-rendered screens, which you travel through by clicking in the direction you want to go (fortunately the programmers have included a 'quick travel' option, allowing you to cut out whole chunks of pointless screens that stand between point A and B). Hot spots abound and form the adventure side of the game and, to be fair, some of the puzzles are actually very well thought out. Conversely though, you're also left wondering what on Earth is going on a lot of the time and whether the animation of a beetle sprouting wings and flying off actually *means* something to the storyline (or whether an animator at Cyan just wanted to show off and add to his CV). I'm not sure that the storyline is being told as well as it could be. It's undoubtedly an engrossing tale, but because the information is so scant and so heavy on the symbolism, you tend to spend more time confused out of your mind. I expect that's where the whole, "You will be captivated" ethos comes from. You know there's something going on, but you'll be buggered if you can work out what it is.

Look, I've got cash. Should I spend it?

I don't know. There are far better adventures of this ilk out there, games that manage to combine well crafted storylines with challenging gameplay and lush visuals to a far more captivating level (*Zork Nemesis* for one). There are also far worse. To be brutally honest to the game, *Riven* is a nice collection of breathtakingly well drawn visuals with some interesting moments that do (providing you're of an open mind) sort of captivate you. It's not going to take over your life by any means, but I wouldn't dismiss it outright either. I've no doubt that it will be a big seller. For one thing, all the *Myst* owners out there will eat it up for dinner, and there are far more of them than there are people reading these cautionary words. All I can really say is, tortured and clichéd as it is, try it before you buy it. **Z**

In Perspective

Lavishly illustrated adventure games like these are somewhat thin on the ground (at least here in the UK) and not many of them manage to interest when they do appear. In many ways, *Riven* is just more of *Myst*, only larger. *Zork Nemesis* was very similar but handled the storytelling side much better. *Labyrinth Of Time* is an oldie but (in my personal view) still a damned goody.

Riven

Zork Nemesis

Myst

Labyrinth of Time

Pandora Directive

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse



Score

Daily Mail readers will no doubt love it.

72

Price: £39.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Broderbund Software

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Web site: www.broderbund.com

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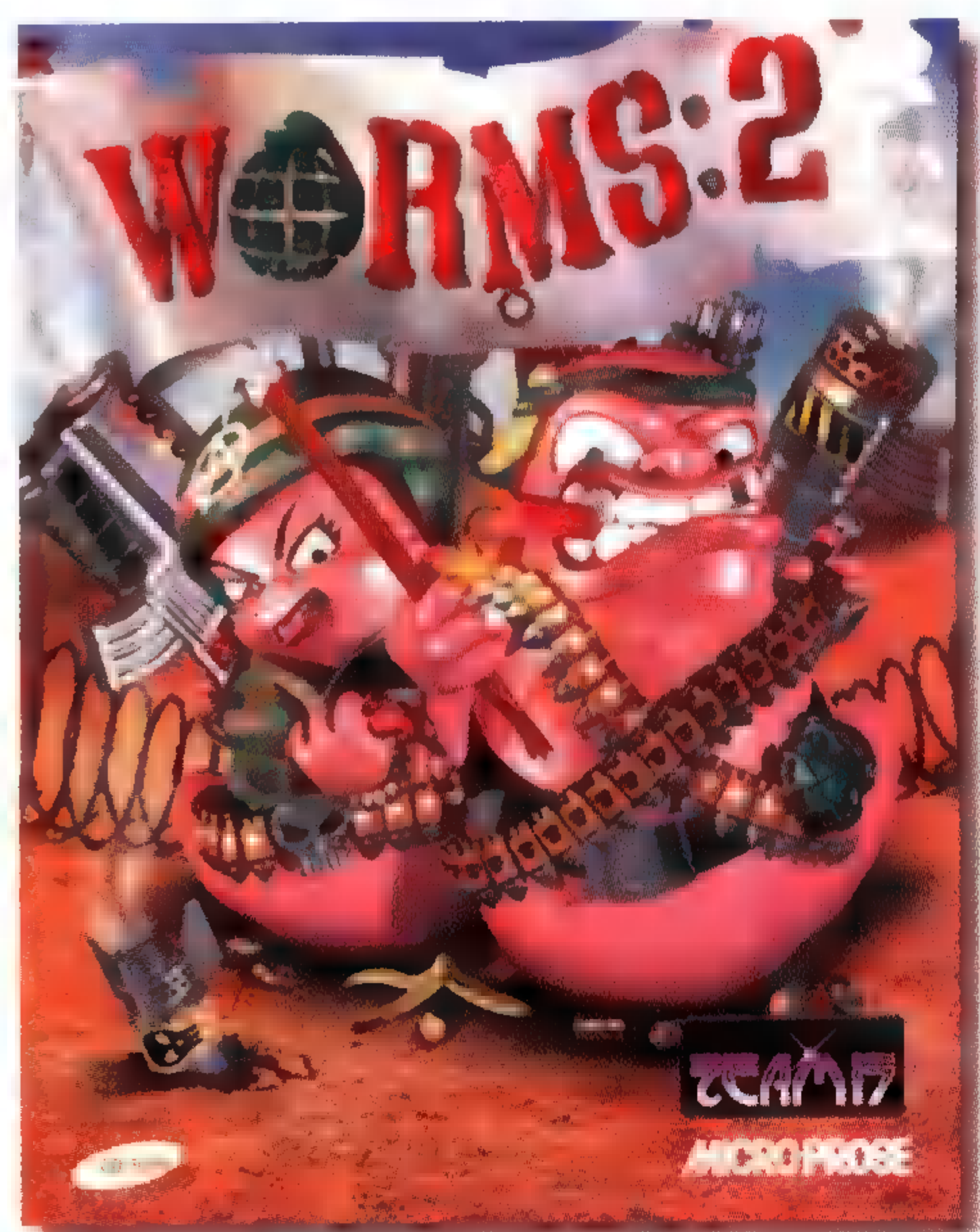


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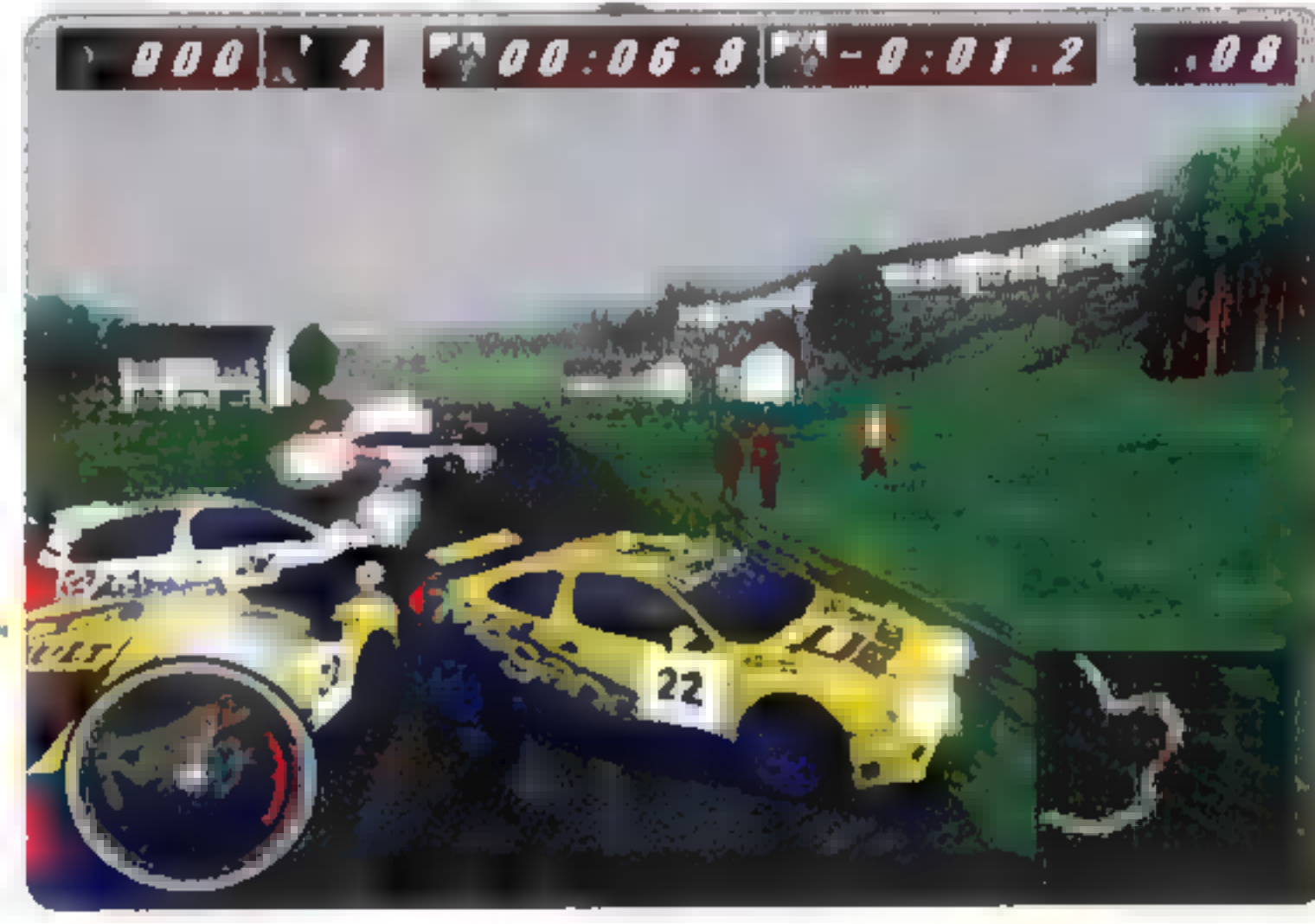
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G-Police



If you want something to show off your shiny new 3D graphics card you could do far worse than invest in this.

John Davison tries to find out if there's a decent game buried in there too.

T

HE 'G' IN *G-POLICE*, FOR THOSE WHO ARE wondering, stands for 'Government'. Apparently you are an operative in a global law enforcement squad on a different planet in the year 2097 (naturally... what other year were you expecting?), and you are reliably informed during the intro that your unit is prone to being a bit crap. Psycho military veterans are policing distant outposts of civilisation (because, as you'd expect, the Earth is completely shagged by this point) in clapped-out equipment, against highly organised criminals and corrupt 'Syndicate-style' corporations.

As the story progresses you learn that your sister, who was one of the more conscientious members of the G-Police, was killed in action under extremely suspicious circumstances. As a reasonably psychotic military veteran yourself you decide that the only way to get to the bottom of what really happened is to enrol as a cop yourself and wheedle out the corruption from within.

All this is pretty academic though, because once you've sat through the beautifully produced intro and stifled giggles as your commanding officer does an impersonation of a post-razorblade gargling Michael Ironside (he of *Highlander 2*, *V* and *SeaQuest DSV* fame). You are then dropped into what can only be described as an attractive 3D shoot 'em up. If forced to describe the whole 'feel' of *G-Police* you'd have to say that it was a sort of cross between *Syndicate Wars*

and a very simplified helicopter combat sim. Divided up into 35 different missions it basically has you performing various tasks as the 'story' of the colony unfolds. Early missions have you simply negotiating the large cityscapes (which are conveniently built under huge domes... so as not to over-

"If G-Police was a girl, she'd be the cute but dumb blonde that sits in the pub showing off her cleavage."

It all looks a bit flash

As you can tell from looking at both the screen shots and the score bar at the end of this review – *G-Police* supports just about every clever bit of hardware under the sun. If you've got a 3D card, this is the baby to show it off with. You want the now obligatory explosions with shock waves? Fancy coloured lighting? Animated textures? Fast frame rates in 16-bit colour SVGA? Well... here you go. This thing supports so many bits of hardware that they've even included AGP support for



when the new PCs arrive next year with this super-fast graphics slot. Unfortunately... there is a down side to this. If you don't actually have any of this flash, high-powered hardware and simply run the thing through Direct 3D in 8-bit colour it actually

looks a bit arse. It's remarkably dark at the best of times and without the snazzy lighting provided by clever hardware 'MIP Mapping' and all that fancy filtering it looks very dull. It also runs a bit slow... even on a P166.



stretch the graphics engine) blowing away aircraft and trucks owned by the malevolent forces that are attempting to take over the colony. This is particularly satisfying thanks to the awesome graphics. Take out an enemy fighter's engine with one of your numerous weapons, and if he doesn't explode immediately you have the pleasure of watching your hapless victim spiral towards the ground with fire engulfing him as he goes. Cool.

Later on though, this relatively simple pleasure develops into something far more convoluted as you are instructed to escort police convoys, protect government officials and investigate smuggled military hardware. It all sounds promising, yes?

Number five ain't alive

Whilst you're engaging in all of these government instigated shenanigans the cities in which you are flying are doing an awfully good impression of being 'real, living, breathing environments'. The roads are filled with cars and trucks trundling about, whilst the sky is filled with aircraft transporting people and cargo around. The whole impression is that you are in the thick of something that is getting on with business. *Syndicate Wars* did a very good job of this too – and things would carry on as normal whether you managed to complete your mission objectives or not. Unfortunately *G-Police* isn't quite as flash as all that – maybe because of its PlayStation roots. Whilst it does a very good impression of being 'alive' it isn't all that forgiving if you screw up. If you let a key 'character' bite the dust you fail the mission and have to do it again – the game won't

(Far left) Combat can get quite frenetic in later levels, and the claustrophobic nature of the levels makes the whole thing a bit confusing from time to time. (Left) For some reason each section of the level seems to be encased in radioactive chicken wire. (Below left) – Dropping bombs is a particularly satisfying way of generating an enormous explosion.

carry on regardless. So, although it would appear initially to be otherwise – the game is actually an extremely linear shoot 'em up.

The level and mission design is reasonably clever throughout... you have gang members racing around blowing up buildings (again... *Syndicate Wars* style), shuttle craft that need helping, people that need escorting and even installations that need bombing. You have different weapons payloads for different missions and even wingmen that you can send after the bad guys... but at the end of the day it's all just a very flash 3D blaster.

If *G-Police* was a girl, she'd be the cute but dumb blonde that sits in the pub showing off her cleavage. If it was a bloke, he'd be the kind of chap that bought designer suits, but left the label on the sleeve so everyone could see what it was. It's all show... That's not to say it's not playable, but it's hardly as deep as it pretends to be.

On the PlayStation, sitting in front of the telly I'd probably be far more up for it. Sitting in the living room playing a game that lacks depth isn't half as bad as when you're sitting in front of your PC. You just can't help expecting more from it. Shame really... Don't get me wrong, *G-Police* is good but I don't think I can quite justify slapping a 'Recommended' sticker on it. 2

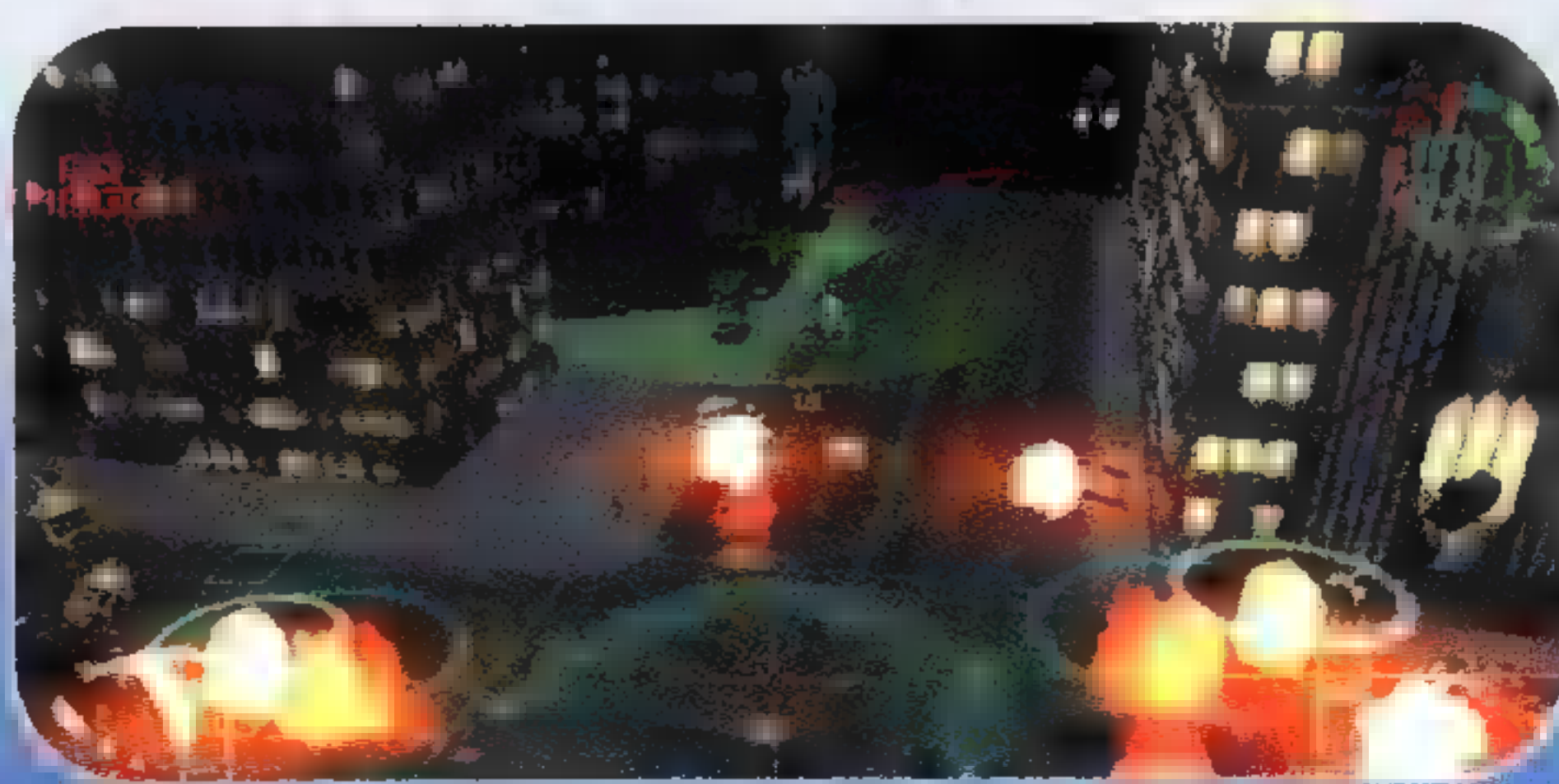
FMV 1, 2 & 3

All of the cut scenes are beautifully produced... although the voice acting leaves a little to be desired. Chappie with the *Terminator* face-job tries very hard to sound like Michael Ironside but ends up sounding a little over-melodramatic in places.

A lapse of self control

Sensitive controls + very large buildings + dark bits = trouble. The controls take a bit of getting used to at first, but once you've got the hang of the way your Havoc controls you'll soon learn that the absolute best method of control is a joystick. The Microsoft pad really comes into its own with this.

(Right) As a 3D showcase, you can hardly fault *G-Police*. Every effect is used... the explosions are spectacular.



In Perspective

Posh 3D action games with helicopter style vehicles are few and far between, and whilst *G-Police* looks incredibly flash, it doesn't quite match up to Blue Byte's *Extreme Assault* (a surprise hit with us) or Nostalgic's graphically inferior *Comanche 3*.

G-Police

Extreme Assault

Soviet Strike

Comanche 3

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P133

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Keyboard, mouse, joystick, joystick



Score

Style over content.

78

Price: £39.99

Release date: November

Publisher: Pygmalion

Telephone: (0151) 282 3000

Web site: www.gpolice.com

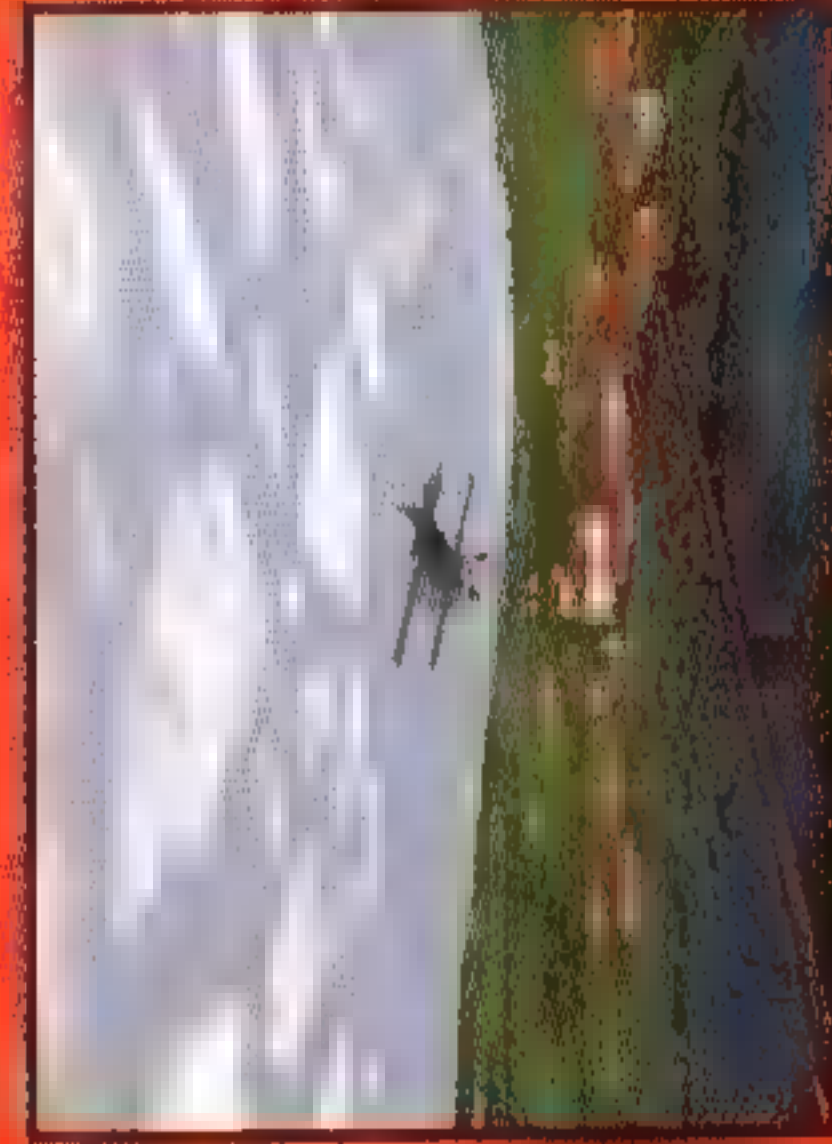
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Red Baron

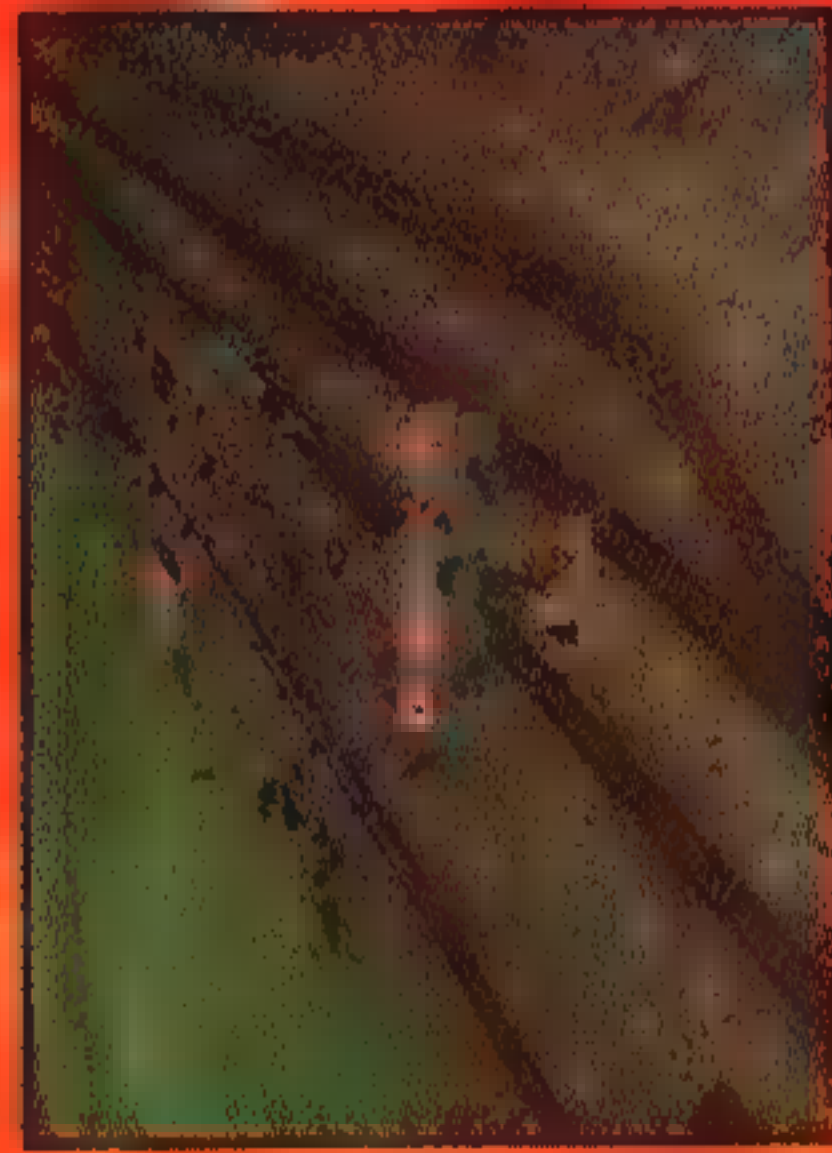
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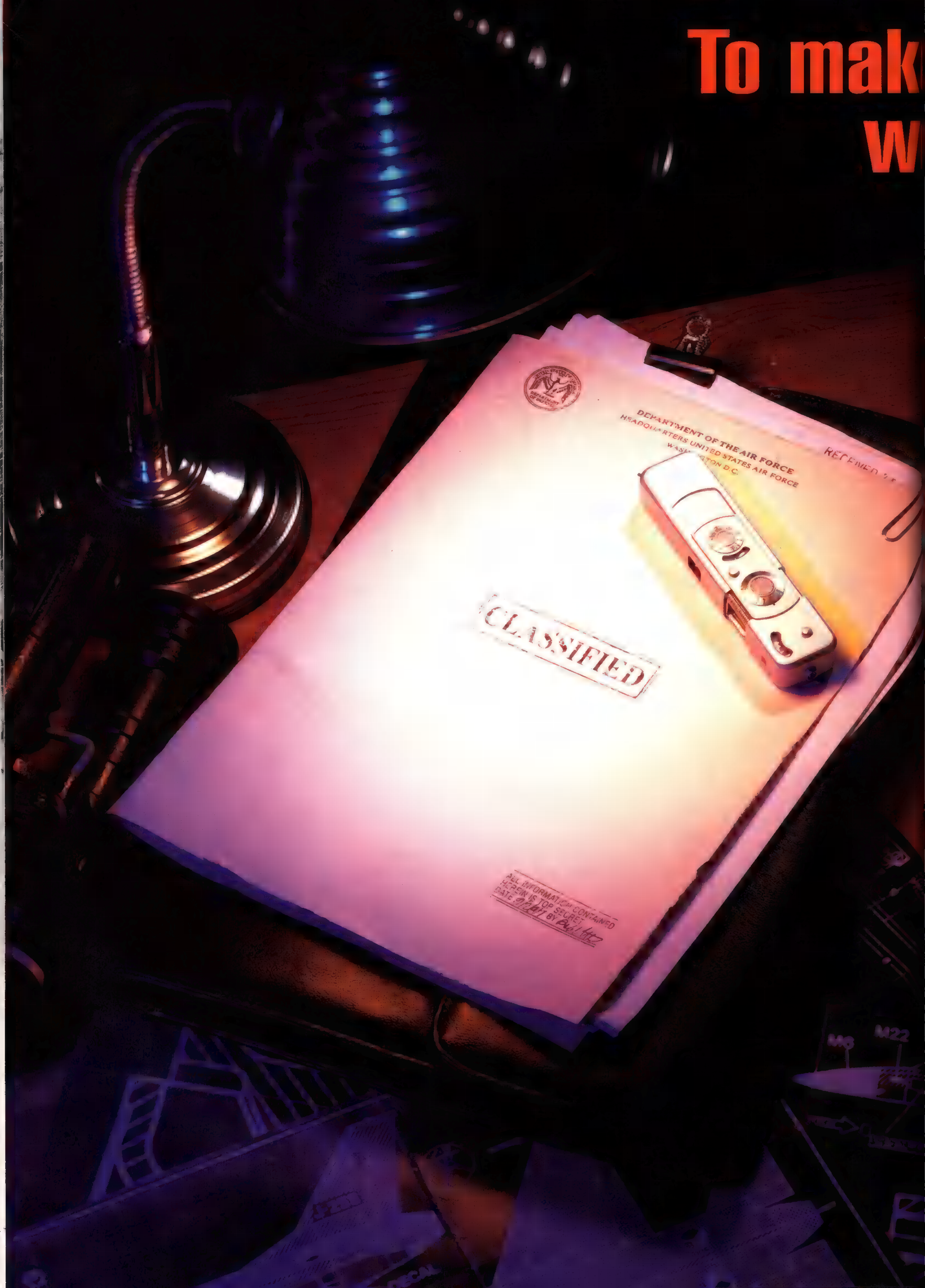
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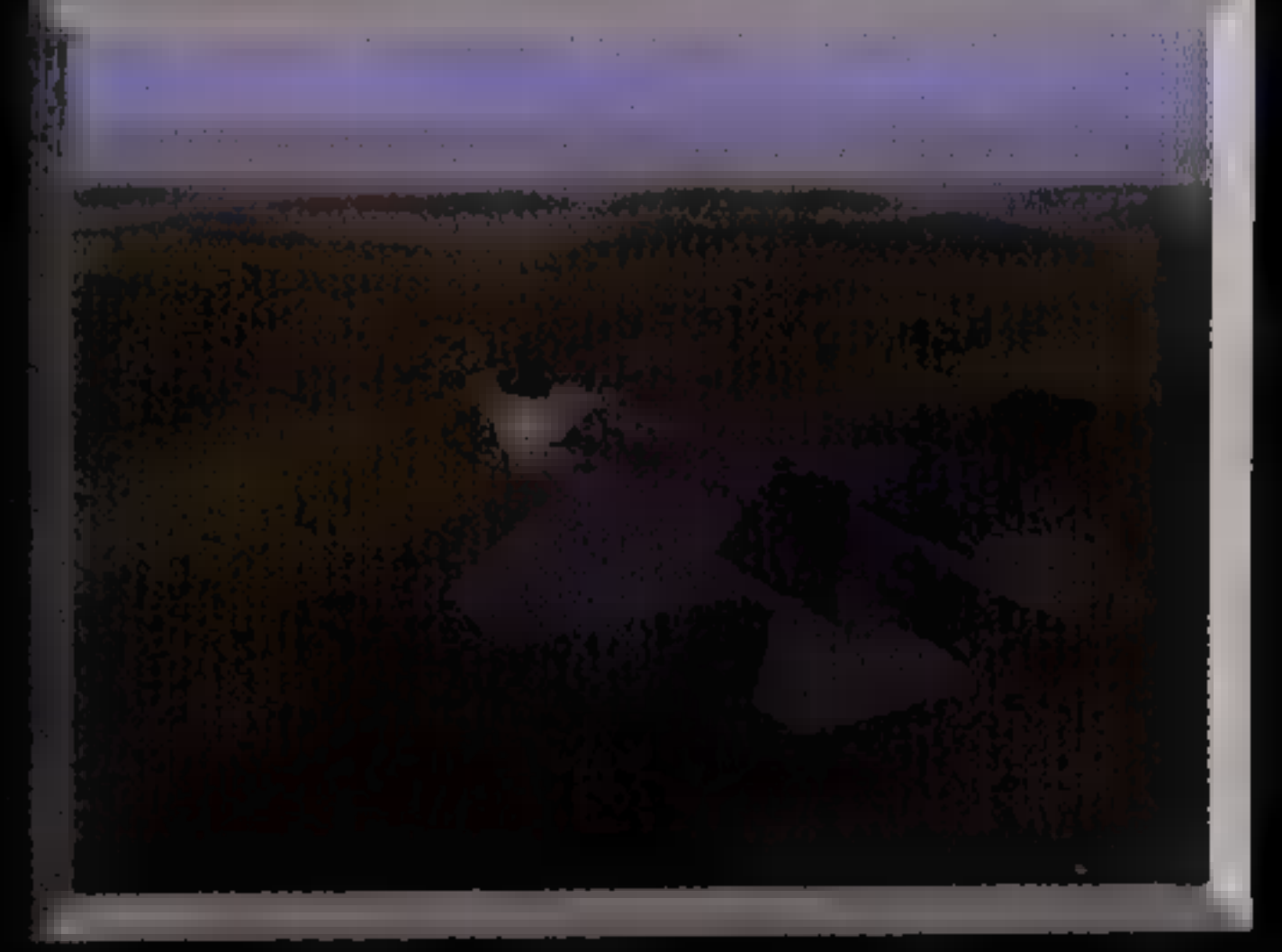
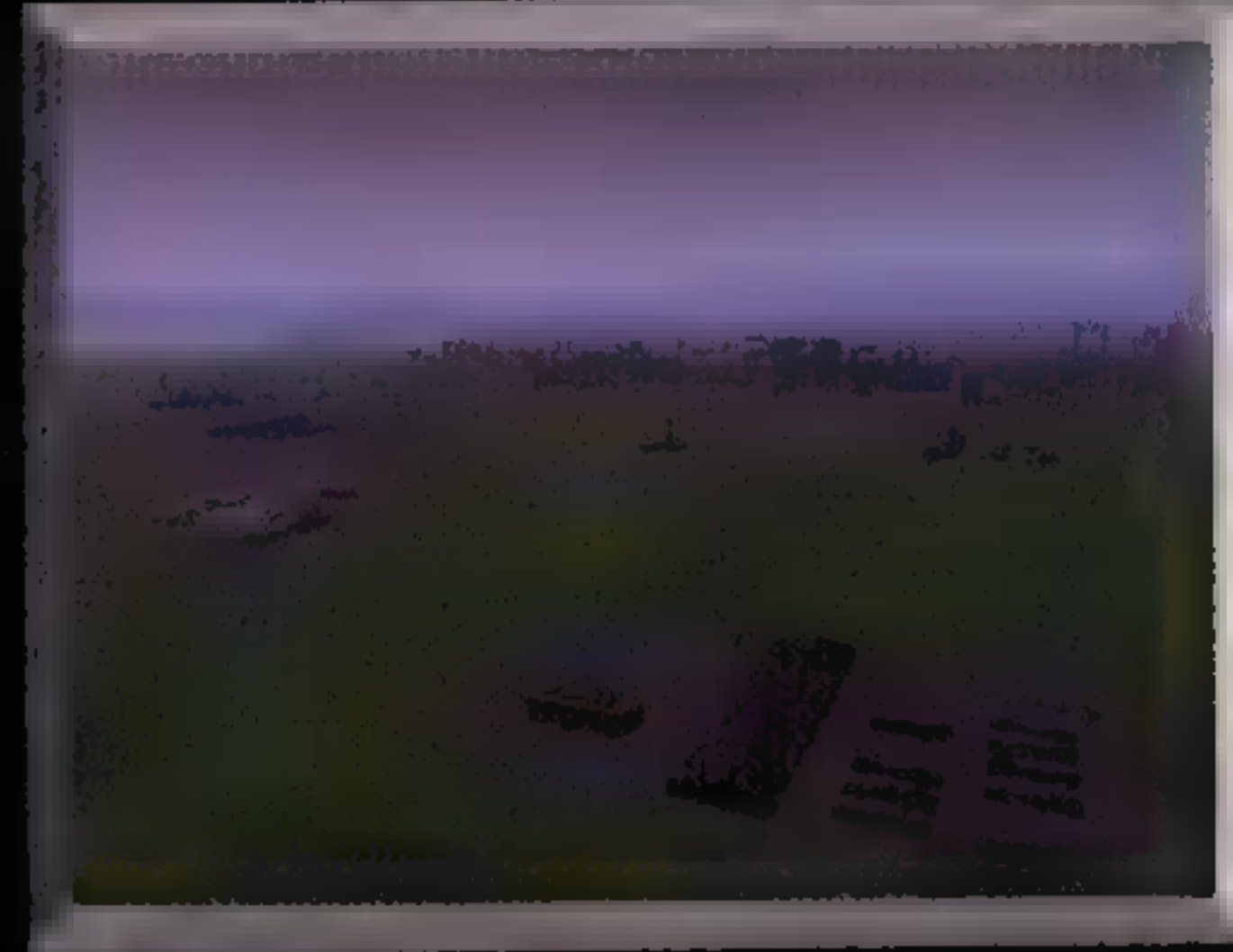
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JSF

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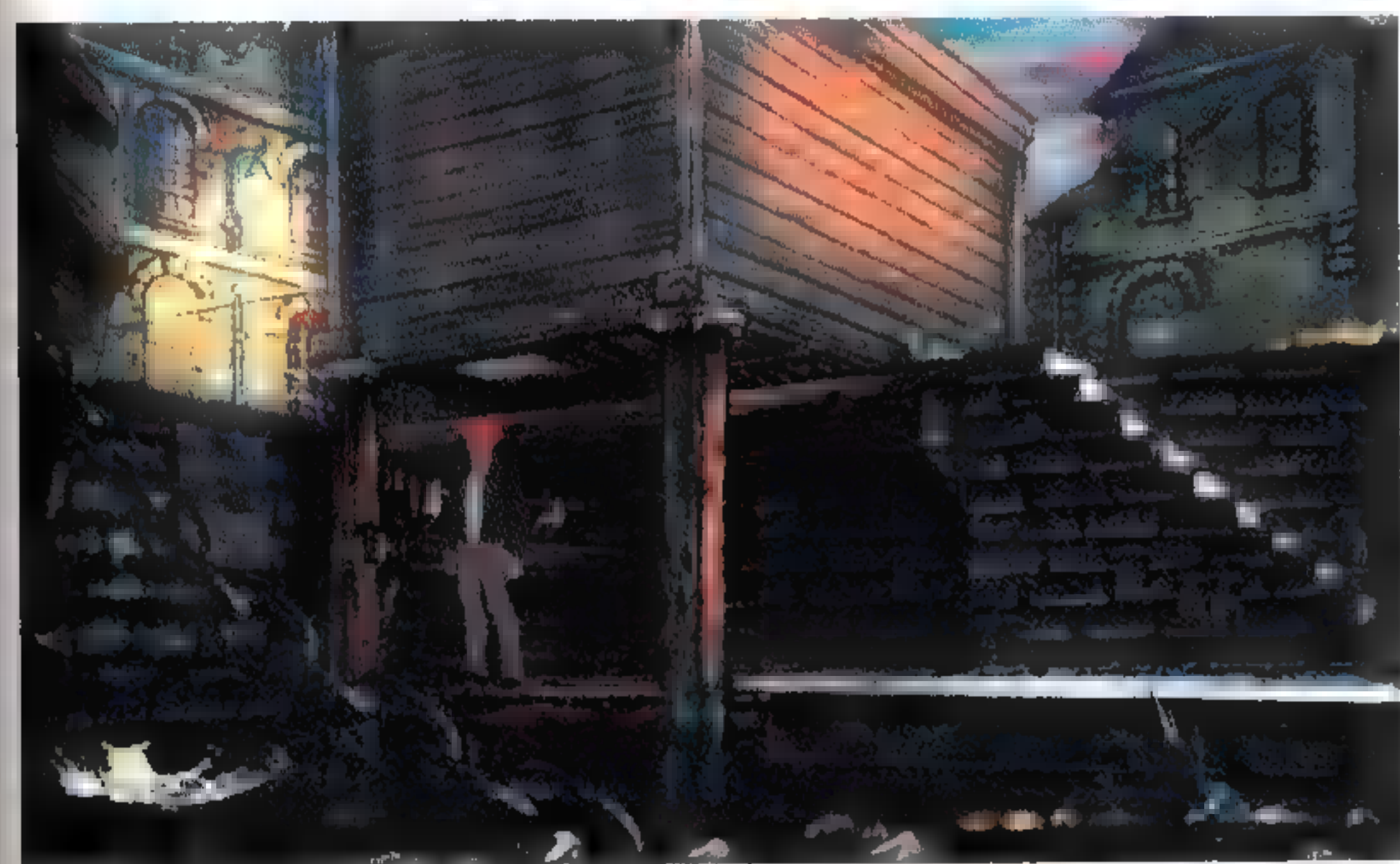
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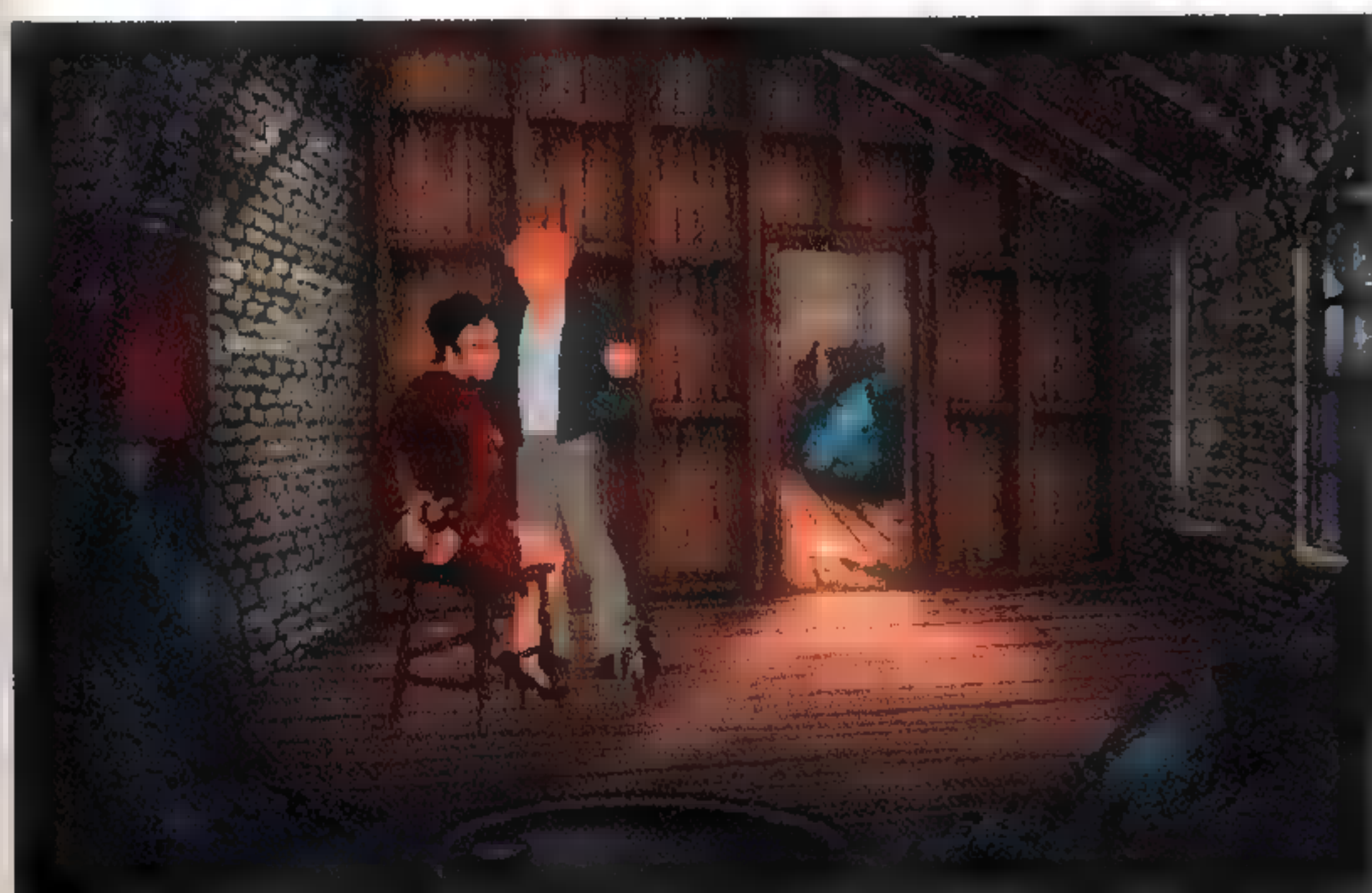
Broken Sword II: The Smoking Mirror



Revolution Software produced one of the best-selling adventure games of last year and now they're back with a sequel. **Paul Presley** prepares to gather more air miles.

7 SOMETIMES WONDER IF, IN MY NEVER-ending quest for the perfect adventure game, I am in fact chasing a lost cause. I was shown a vision many years ago of something beautiful called *Monkey Island* and, like King Arthur and his Holy Grail, I've been searching in vain for the fabled treasure ever since. I've often come close only to have my hopes dashed at the last. Games that have promised true enlightenment prove to be naught but shiny trinkets.

However, it would seem that this is a solitary quest. The public at large seem happy to spend their time with the less than perfect, the shinier the better usually. Witness *Myst*. Or indeed *Broken Sword*. Both good games I hasten to add, just not the ultimate pieces of perfection that I one day long to find. But they sell, and sell well. And subsequently spawn sequels. *Myst* begat *Riven* (see page 99) and *Broken Sword* begat *Broken Sword II: The Smoking Mirror*.



George takes a more direct route with Nico in the hope of winning her heart.



(Above left) Hanging around the docks at night, eh? Now I know how George makes his money. (Above) Latin American seduction techniques tend to be far more subtle than most.

It's no secret that we had our problems with the first game, but all credit to Revolution, they've apparently listened not only to our misgivings but also the feedback (both positive and negative – although mainly the former) of the public. How well have they interpreted all this in the game though? Let's find out, shall we?

"It was a time of war..."

In a nutshell then, *Broken Sword II* takes American do-gooder George Stobbard back to Paris to meet his old flame, Nico, puts him in mortal danger before you can say, "Où est la plus belle plage?", embroils him in a chase around the world for ancient artefacts and at one point sees him chatting to two hunky men in their underwear (don't ask). I would elaborate further, but not only would that spoil your enjoyment of the game should you buy it, but I'm

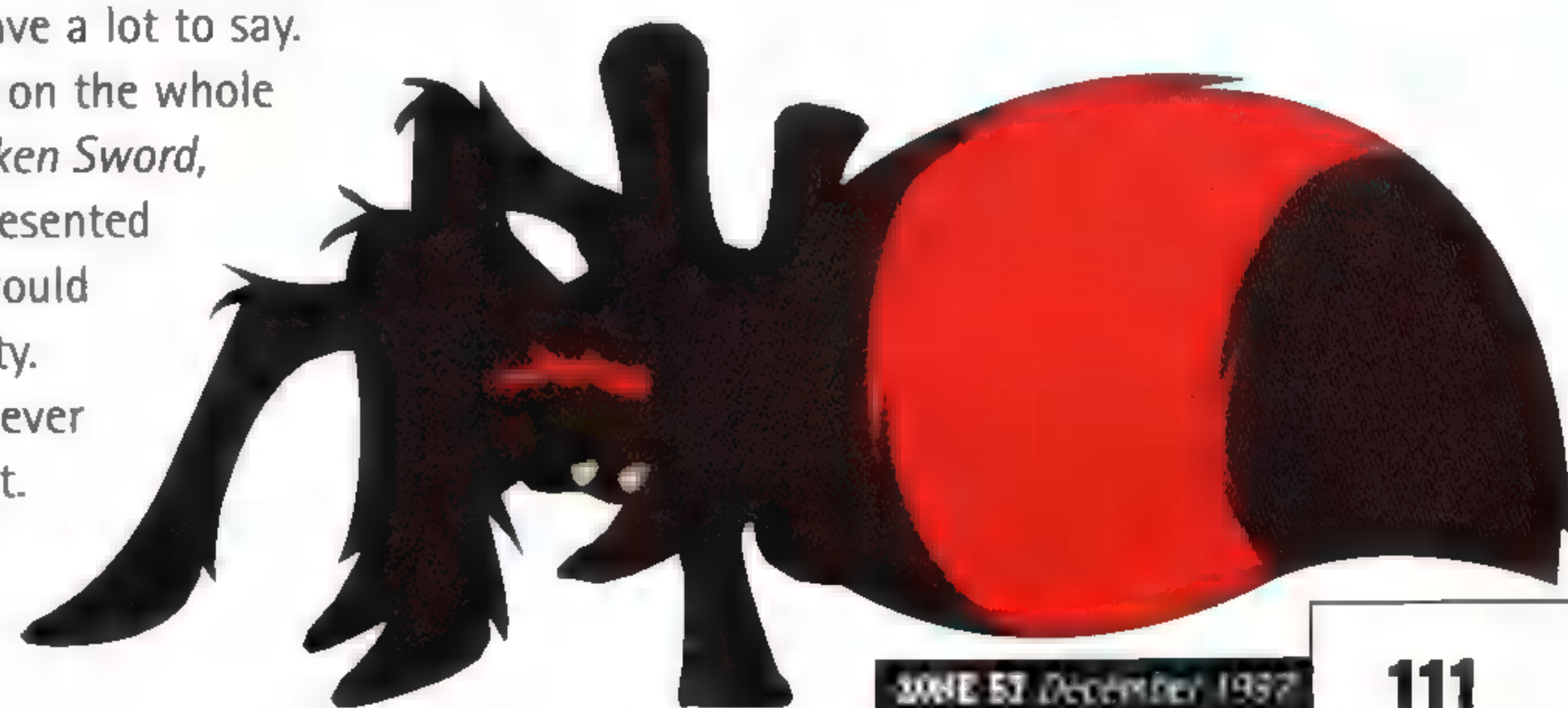


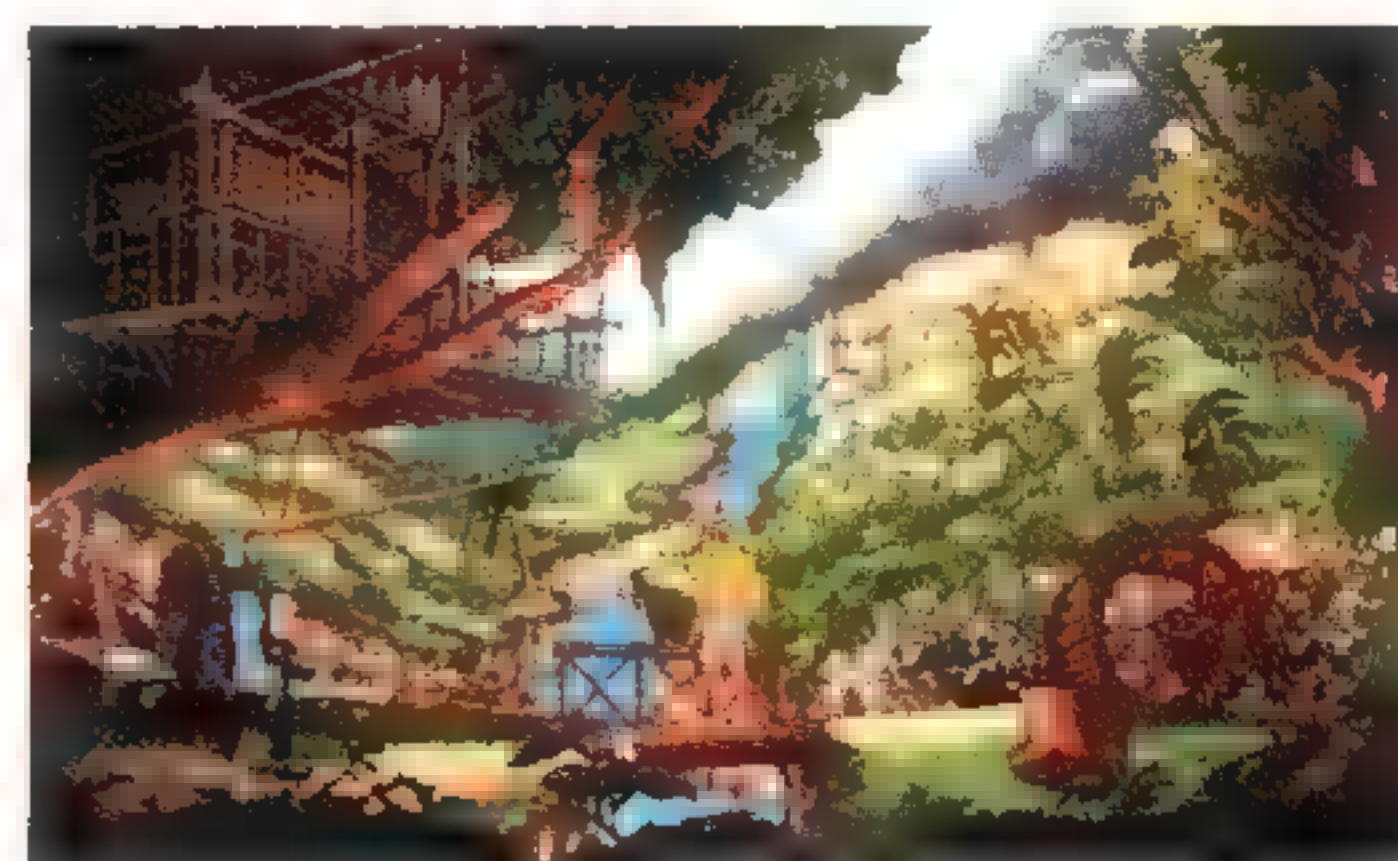
George has a few words with Nico's ex-boyfriend, apparently under the watchful gaze of, er, Captain Birdseye.

To find something with such high presentation values and a well-structured storyline is refreshing.

also relatively short on space and have a lot to say.

Starting with the fact that, while on the whole it's a better game than the first *Broken Sword*, generally tighter all round, better presented and, yes, more enjoyable to play, I would question the game's level of difficulty. Aside from one or two moments, I never really felt too challenged throughout.





(Above) These jungle tribes get more advanced every day. (Above top right) In true 'annoying Yank on holiday' style, George continued to wear sunglasses even in the dead of night. (Above right) Exotic locations abound, and France.

Part of the problem is one that afflicts an awful lot of games in this mould – there's no real thought needed to complete a puzzle. Often it's just a case of trying different combinations of objects until something works. For the most part I didn't feel as though I was really working something out, more just trying to guess the correct route from A to B. It's still a problem of over-relying on object-related puzzles that appear to have been inserted just to give a challenge. Revolution still need to find a way to make the well-plotted storyline flow smoothly into the gameplay.

Icon see clearly now

Another area I still have a few problems with is the character interaction. Conversations are still a case of starting a conversation, then selecting one of a number of icons that appear along the bottom of the screen. These icons are somewhat confusing not only because it isn't always readily apparent what they represent or what line of questioning you are going to take. It's limiting on behalf of the player and reinforces the route-following atmosphere I mentioned earlier.

On the plus side, the writing is much better this time round and some of the dialogue is indeed pretty funny.

It's not *Monkey-Island-Roll-On-The-Floor-Laughing-Till-You-Vomit* funny, but it gets the story across well. There are still places where the conversations seem to take an eternity to finish, but overall this section is much tighter and much more polished than the first game.

Move over Disney

Polish is the key word in fact, when describing *Broken Sword II*. The one area that Revolution shine brighter than any other software star is in the look and style of the game. Graphically, this


title is very impressive. The transitions between gameplay and FMV are seamless, and the feeling of playing an interactive animated movie is total.

I would like to see more attention paid to George's characterisation. A single line about visiting his father doesn't really do enough to let the player 'get into' the role and care enough about getting him through the tale in one piece. Plus I'd love to know how he can afford to travel all around the world at the drop of a hat. I reckon he smuggles drugs and all this 'global adventuring' stuff is just a front.

Backs to the future

The whole adventure game genre is in something of a creative nadir at the moment and so to find something with such high presentation values and a well-structured storyline is refreshing to say the least. Revolution are still struggling to totally capture that early LucasArts 'magic', so to speak, and there are times when you feel they're pushing a little too hard on the presentation button at the expense of the gameplay. But, on the whole, they're pretty much single-handedly keeping the British adventure market alive, a worrying enough statement in itself.

I do fear that with games such as *Starship Titanic*, *Blade Runner* and *Grim Fandango* about to appear with all their new innovations and envelope-pushing gameplay ideas,

Revolution might be shooting themselves in the foot slightly by not experimenting more with ideas such as the meta-characters and the Virtual Theatre concept. I get the impression that the whole genre is about to be reborn. Let's just hope Revolution don't get too complacent or they could get left behind. 



(Above) Characters from the first game lend an air of continuity to proceedings. (Above centre) Giz us a kiss Nico. (Above right) No way, not with that cheap lipstick, you look like some dirty ol' tart. I'm off to the docks for a bit of rough.

The Polychrome

Monkey Island is, was, and ever shall be, the benchmark for side-on 'cartoony' adventure games. *Broken Sword II*, while all well and good from a technical point of view, doesn't have the absolute perfect mixture of presentation, storyline, writing and ultimate playability that LucasArts were able to pull off. It's a big improvement over the first *Broken Sword* though, and when the only real competition is coming from the likes of *The Feeble Files*, it can hardly go wrong.

Broken Sword II

Broken Sword

Monkey Island

The Feeble Files

Teck Speed

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

Score

A good story, well told. It's just the adventure elements that let it down.

75

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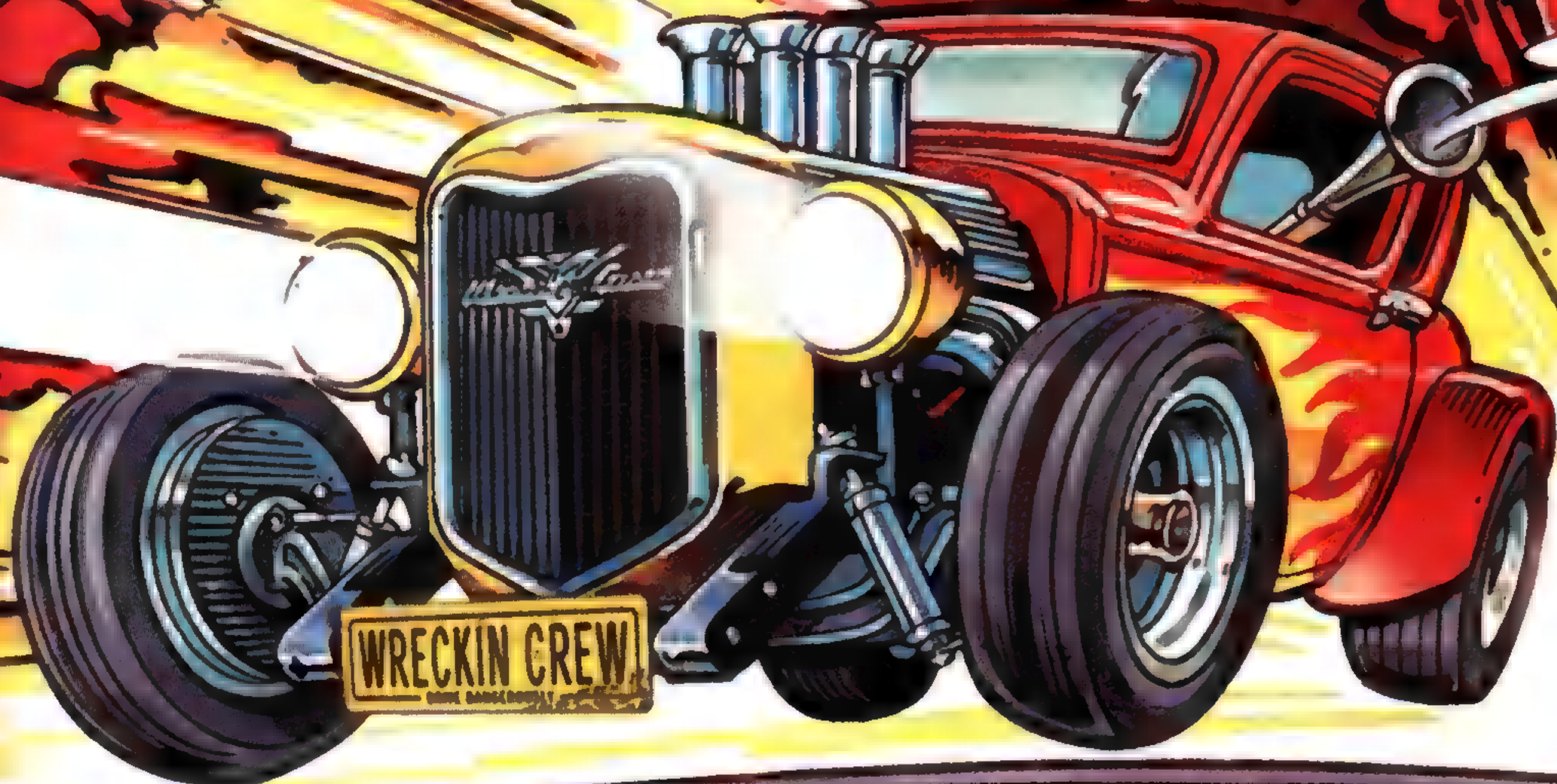
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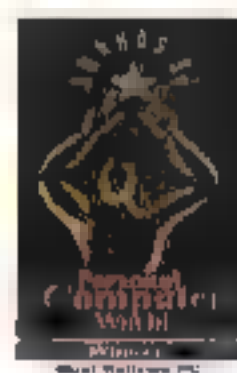
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A computer screen displaying the text "Surf the NET" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "DIAL" is written in a similar font, with the letter "D" enclosed in a circular icon. The background of the screen is dark with some horizontal lines, suggesting a digital or network theme.

Betrayal in Antara

Thinking he was about to test-fire the latest Russian-made rocket propelled grenade launcher, **Richie Shoemaker's** little face dropped when he realised that RPG could also stand for 'really pants game'.



FANS OF ROLE-PLAYING games are patient people. They have to be. It isn't that often that a decent RPG comes out. If we zip back to the beginning

of time and then leapfrog over a few years of text-ridden adventures, we can place *Dungeon Master* as the first great RPG, since which we've had the sturdy *Ultima* series, including the excellent *Underworld* games. Now we have the creamy smooth *Lands of Lore II* and soon we'll have *Ultima On-Line*. Okay, so there are some good games about, but generally (like the people who buy them) good RPG's don't get out much.

Let's be honest, they ain't that cool either. Girls do not come running when you trump off the benefits of your bronze helmet and +1 jammy sword. Stuck in your bedroom though, you don't have to worry much about going out and meeting people who would rather prod you with sticks. I can sympathise with these people. But they bring ridicule on themselves, especially if they buy games like *Betrayal in Antara*.

Like *Ultima Underworld*, *Betrayal* has you navigating via a first-person window in a 3D world. Your quest involves guiding the young messieurs William and Aren in their bid to solve the greater mystery and gain a high level of magical prowess. There is a quaint little story that sets the scene; it's nothing special, but it does spark off a tiny bit of curiosity and that certainly helps. You'll also be given little sub quests whilst on your travels, so



there is always something to do, but unfortunately things can get boring very quickly.

The graphics are best described as adequate.

The buildings may be quite detailed, but the landscapes are flat and movement isn't very smooth. This is no *LOL2* of course, but what really messes things up is the clumsy interface. To get anywhere with the minimum of fuss, get used to the keys. Otherwise you'll probably get through two mice and suffer a mild bout of RSI before completing the game.

The in-game speech doesn't help matters either. Schoolboy American twang combines with whining Texan drawl to produce a 'gets-on-tits' experience comparable only to the continued existence of Jim Davidson. Imagine you are controlling a young Kevin Costner or Christian Slater. Don't get me wrong - I have nothing against the Americans, it's just badly out of place in a land of castles and goblins. At least Joe Pesci's New York-Italian squeal might have injected some smiles.

Combat is very much like the game's predecessor, *Betrayal at Krondor*. When you come across an enemy, real-time movement stops and hex turn-based combat takes over. It works, but I'm not sorry to say, it's v. poor.

Basically, *Betrayal at Antara* is a big game with a mildly engaging storyline. There are a wide range of characters to meet and lots of land to cover, and if that's enough to convince you of its merits, then fine. The problem is that it's dated, badly implemented and, quite frankly, dull. You shouldn't have to force yourself to play a game just because you paid good money for it. It may well come on three CDs, but that just prolongs the agony. By the time you've finished the game you could have sired a family (if you meet the right girl). I'm sure bringing up two baby girls and a young son would prove a greater and far more rewarding challenge. But then so would keeping a Tamagotchi alive for a few days.



(left) This is one of the first characters you come across who can be considered friendly. "You ain't from 'round these parts are you boy?" (Right) If your screen looks like this you could be in mortal danger... from being bored half to death.

The Penetration

Just when you are on the verge of thinking someone has redeemed their shattered reputation, something comes waltzing along, grabs them by the short and curlies, pulls them back through the mud and pushes them in the bushes as an afterthought. *Betrayal in Antara* is of this ilk, as it's caused seemingly irreparable damage to a genre that was on the brink of re-unification with the games-playing world. RPG's have been perhaps fatally and unceremoniously stabbed in the back. Et tu Antara? (Not that we are suggesting its actions were intentional, of course).

Lands of Lore 2

Lands of Lore

Realms of the Haunting

Ultima Underworld II

Betrayal in Antara

Weak points

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: 486 DX4/100

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

Note: Windows 3.1/95

Score

Buy *LOL2* instead.

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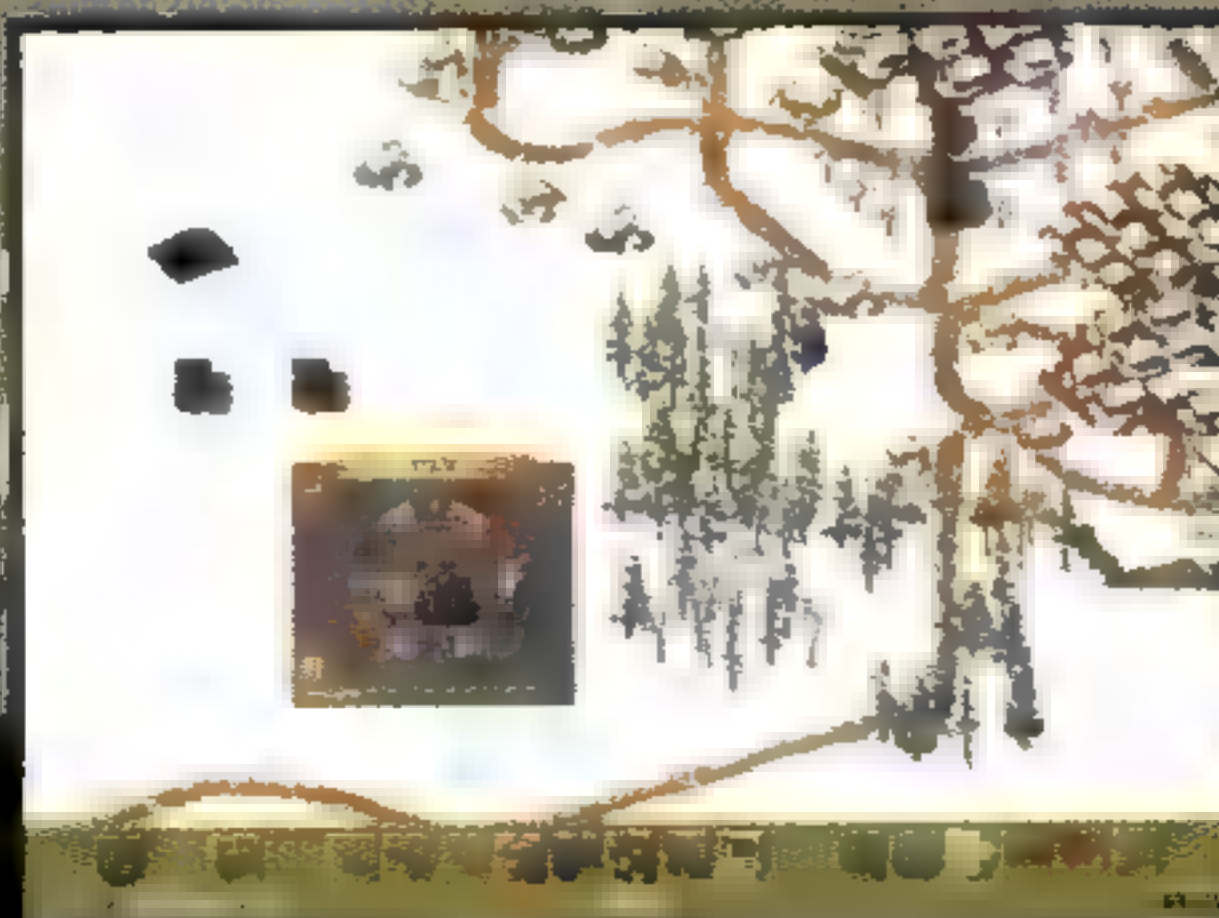
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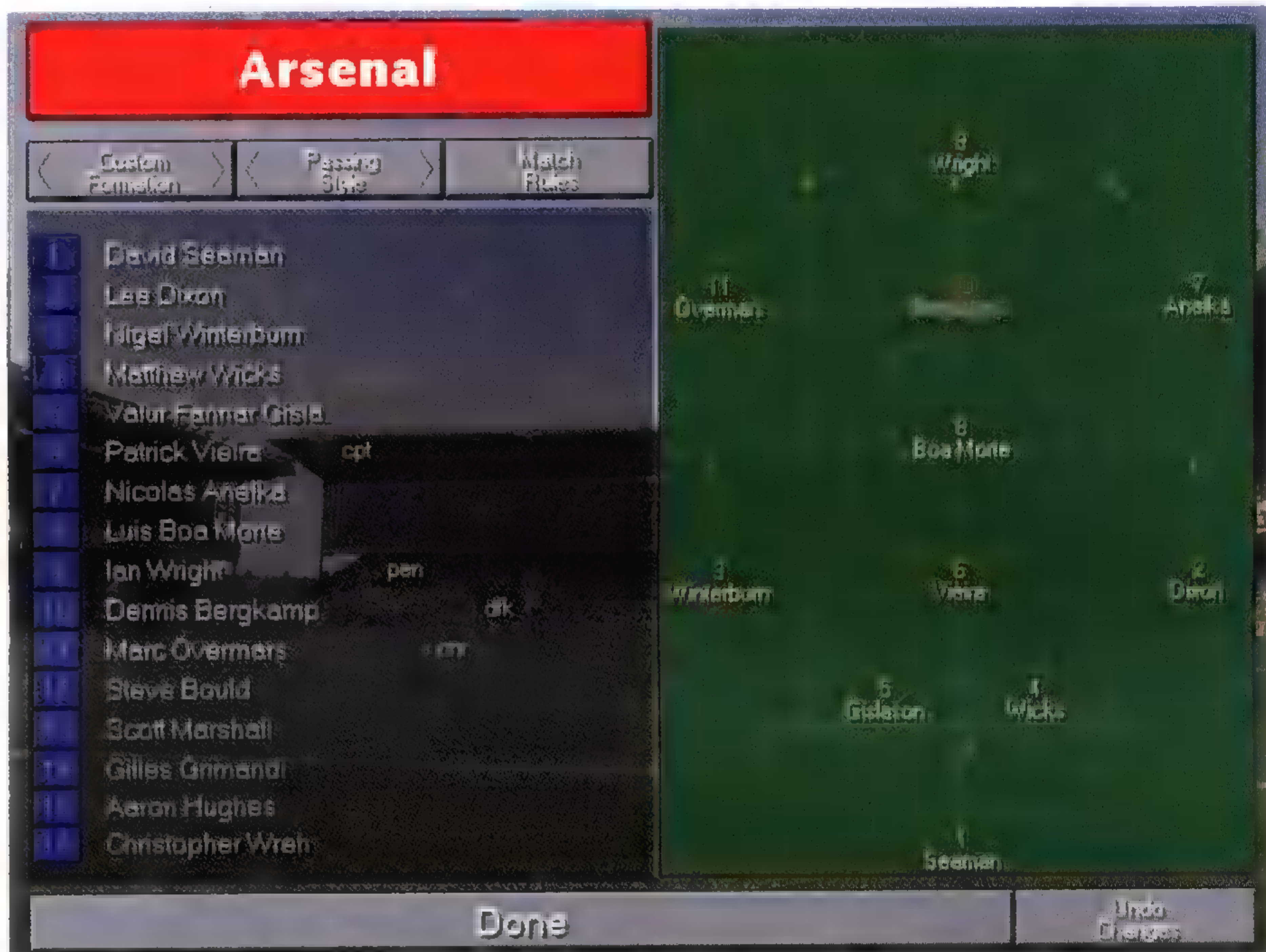
Championship Manager 97/98



Break out the thermal car coats. Let there be high-speed cud-chewing and unintelligible gesturing. *Championship Manager 97/98* is here. (So, unfortunately, is **Patrick McCarthy**, but you can't have everything, I suppose).

7

IT'S WEIRD HOW CM2 AFFECTS PEOPLE. No matter how well you've been doing in the previous version of the game, no matter how fond you are of some of the players you've bought, developed from scratch, or discovered by accident; no matter how proud you are that you've taken someone from the infested gutters of



It's been made harder: harder to score; harder to succeed long-term; harder to work out a winning formation.

Division 3 up to the heights of Europe; as soon as the new version comes in, you abandon your old game. Instantly. The arrival of the new disk has the same effect as a new football season itself: you're full of fresh hopes, excited about the prospect of new (real-life) buys, and itching to get into it. (That doesn't explain why some people around here immediately rush to buy all the same players they had in the previous version, but that's another matter).

This version is the last CM2 update we'll see. Next year we'll have CM3 – a whole new re-working. No doubt people will be up in arms at some of the changes planned – some of the more anal fans have apparently been giving the developers a hard time about the minor alterations. Obsessives don't take kindly to change.

Here we go again...

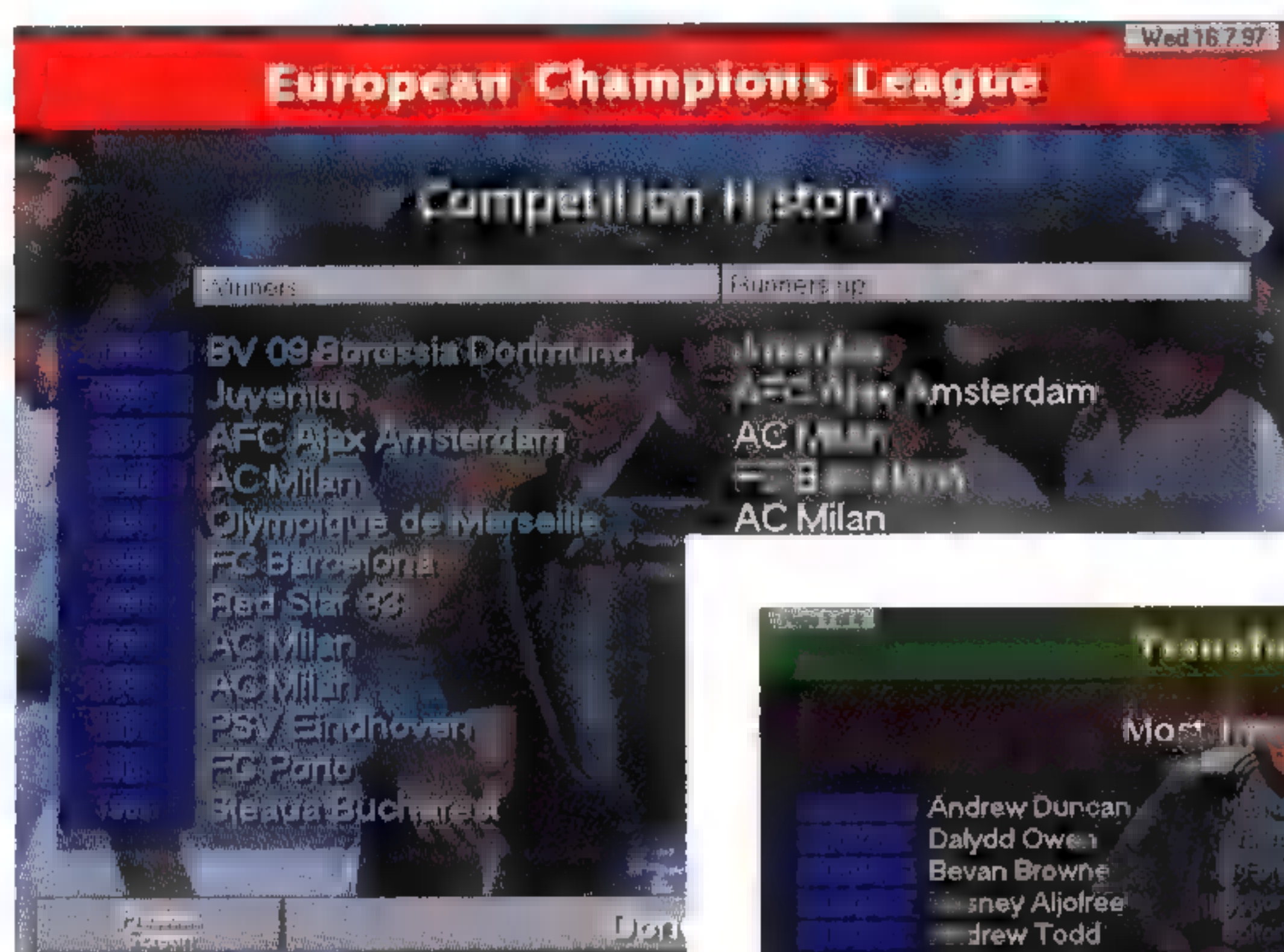
This update comes with a slightly altered version of the game. It's been made harder: harder to score; harder to succeed long-term; harder to work out a winning formation. At times, it's like playing the original, where you needed to create four chances in order to get a goal, and the computer



Note the addition of a new 'Adaptability' rating that shows how quickly a player will adapt to a new club.



For the first time 'real life' injuries have been included, so it's no Shearer 'til the new year.. Shame about Roy Keane, eh?



More players, more squads, more stats! Heaven is now a place on earth.



chubby in even the most ardent fans. The big new ideas (virtual dress-me-up manager dolls; light-sourced dancing mascots, or whatever) are being saved for next year's CM3. You'd be hard pressed to

◀ (believing itself to be some kind of electronic Maradona) seemed to need half that.

You need to concentrate more on winning the ball back than before, and a different approach to away games may also help. The boards' attitudes to managers are more hard-nosed and there are changes in the way players react in matches — headstrong players retaliate after bad fouls, or remember who it was that 'got them', so they can dish out some extras later in the game, and so on.

Real-life major injuries have, for the first time, been incorporated into the game — along with recuperation times. So Shearer's out until Easter; Chris Armstrong's out until about October (the game starts in July, remember). The day I wrote this, it was announced that Roy Keane would be out for the whole season — a shame, because they were talking about ensuring he would be in the game.

New features

Most of the new features are unlikely to induce a full-on

even notice some of the changes in this version unless you're a real anal obsessive type. Hang on, that's everyone who plays it. Anyway, 16MB of RAM lets you run multiple leagues at the same time, from all major European leagues (and Scotland), as long as you have the processing power (running three leagues on a P90 really drags: you have all those extra matches, not to mention Under-21 internationals). Run an 8MB game if your machine's crap.

More new features

Basically, it's an update disk with the odd new feature and tweaked gameplay. There are things that will irritate you and you might quibble with some of the ratings. The main reason for buying it is to have this season's stats. As such, 30 quid may seem excessive, especially as you could download one of the updates from the internet into the old version. But you do get the chance to play in far-flung leagues and you do get a harder challenge. You know you're going to buy it. **Z**

The editor

For the first time, the magical jiggery-pokery used to create the players, teams and managers in the game is yours for the asking, giving you power hitherto unprecedented in the realms of human experience. With this tool, you're only slightly lower down than God on the All-Powerful Beings ladder. Well, Paul Daniels, then.

You can mess about with stuff in all the databases, editing player ratings and even creating new players from scratch, as I've done here. Cheats and blackguards will, of course, abuse this power. Right-thinking people like us won't go near it. We've only changed a few things here to show you what you can do.

It's a bit disappointing, really — you can only use it before you start a game. Which sort of defeats the object of having it in there, really, because no-one's going to check through every rating before they start. And if, once you start a game, you notice some players have ratings you'd like to change, you'll have to start again. The Collyers claim they never intended it to be used to alter things as the season progresses, which is why they haven't changed it from the one they use into a more friendly version. It's kind of, "Here you go, we've finished with it, take it or leave it." Personally, I'll leave it. Meanwhile, if you want to keep players up to date as they move around in real life, you'll have to use the editors on the internet, which apparently still work with the new code.



The Personality

It's harder to play, and if you're a fan of humorous, cartoon characters and light-sourced three-dimensional changing rooms, it will still seem minimal, stark and probably slightly scary. There's still something about it that other games don't have: it's easier to suspend your disbelief with this one than it is with the others, and if you disagree with some of the statistics you can go in and change them yourself.

Championship Manager 2 97/98

Championship Manager 2

Other footy management games

Playing Fantasy Football

Watching Fantasy Football

Specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: Pentium recommended

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

Note: 16Mb RAM required for games with multiple countries. In-game editor works better in DOS. No 3D accelerator cards required. (Ho ho.)

Score

The best just got harder.



Price: £29.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

Telephone: 0181 780 2222

Web site: www.computink.co.uk/cm2

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Personal Computers

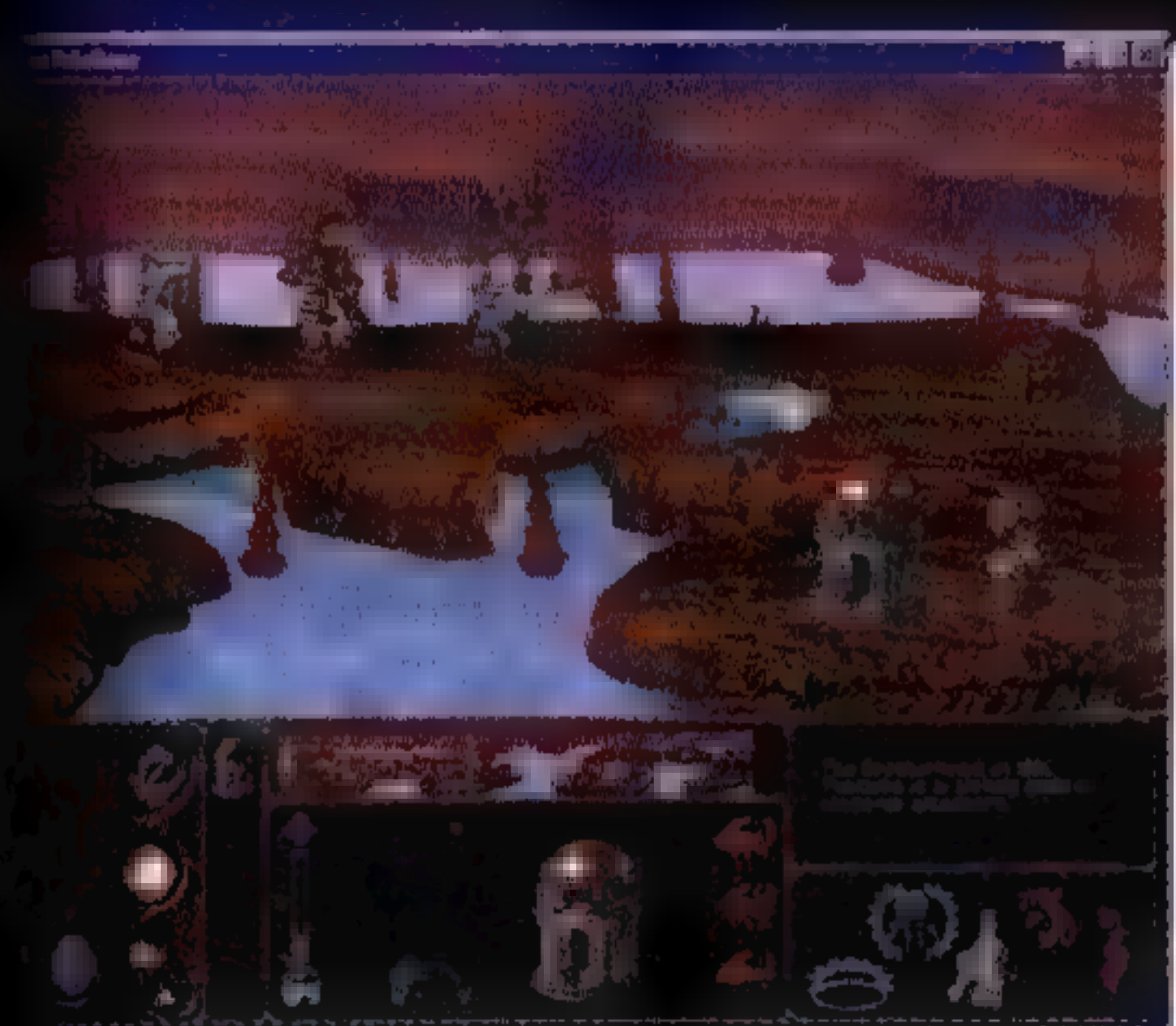
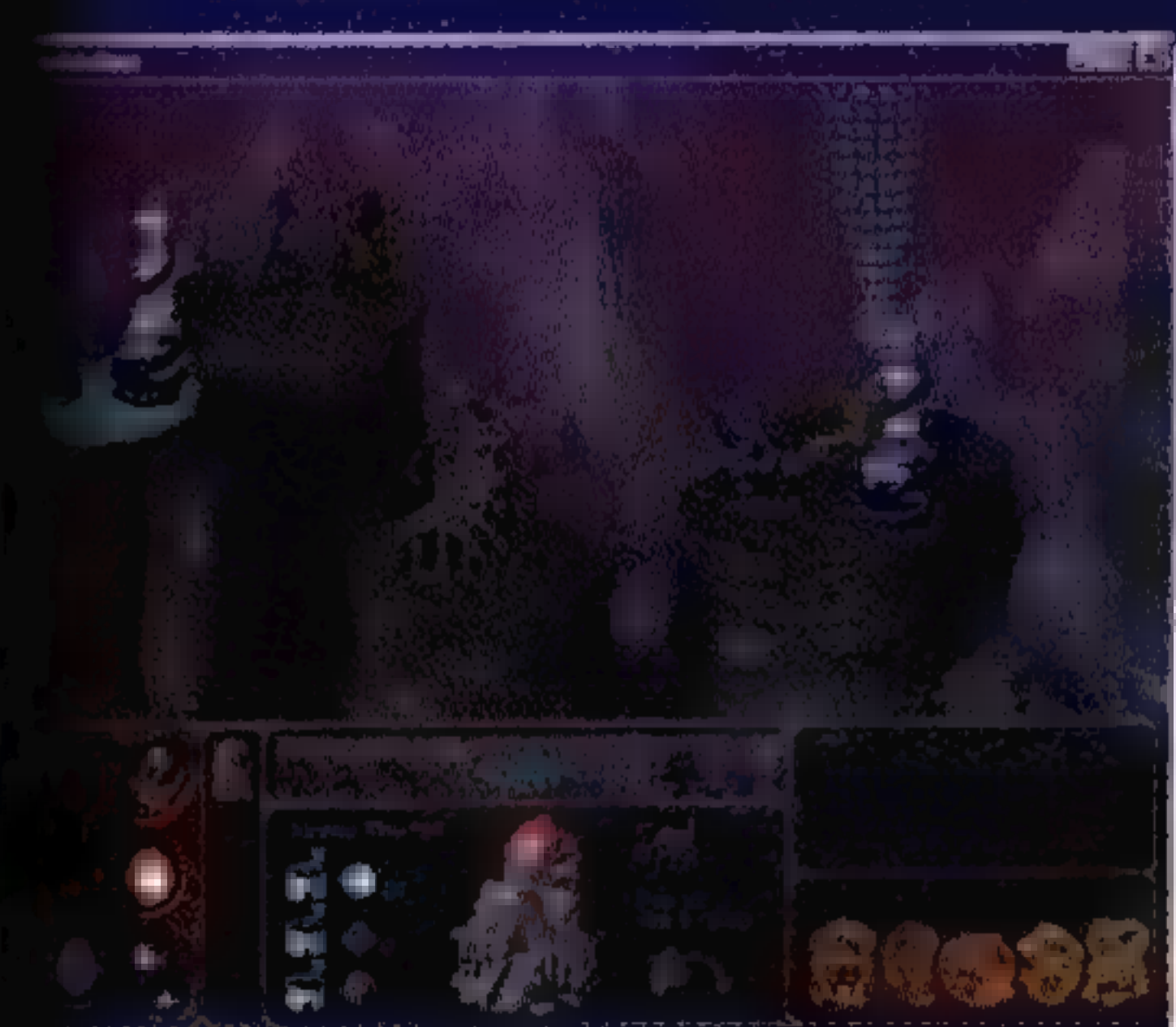
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From The Logic Factory, award winning publisher of Ascendancy, Best Strategy Software of 1996.



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PC
CD Rom



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Please state fully how accident happened.

While travelling at a steady 65 mph, I saw a frog I recognised from school, pull a moonie causing me to swerve at least 3 times in an attempt to kill him.

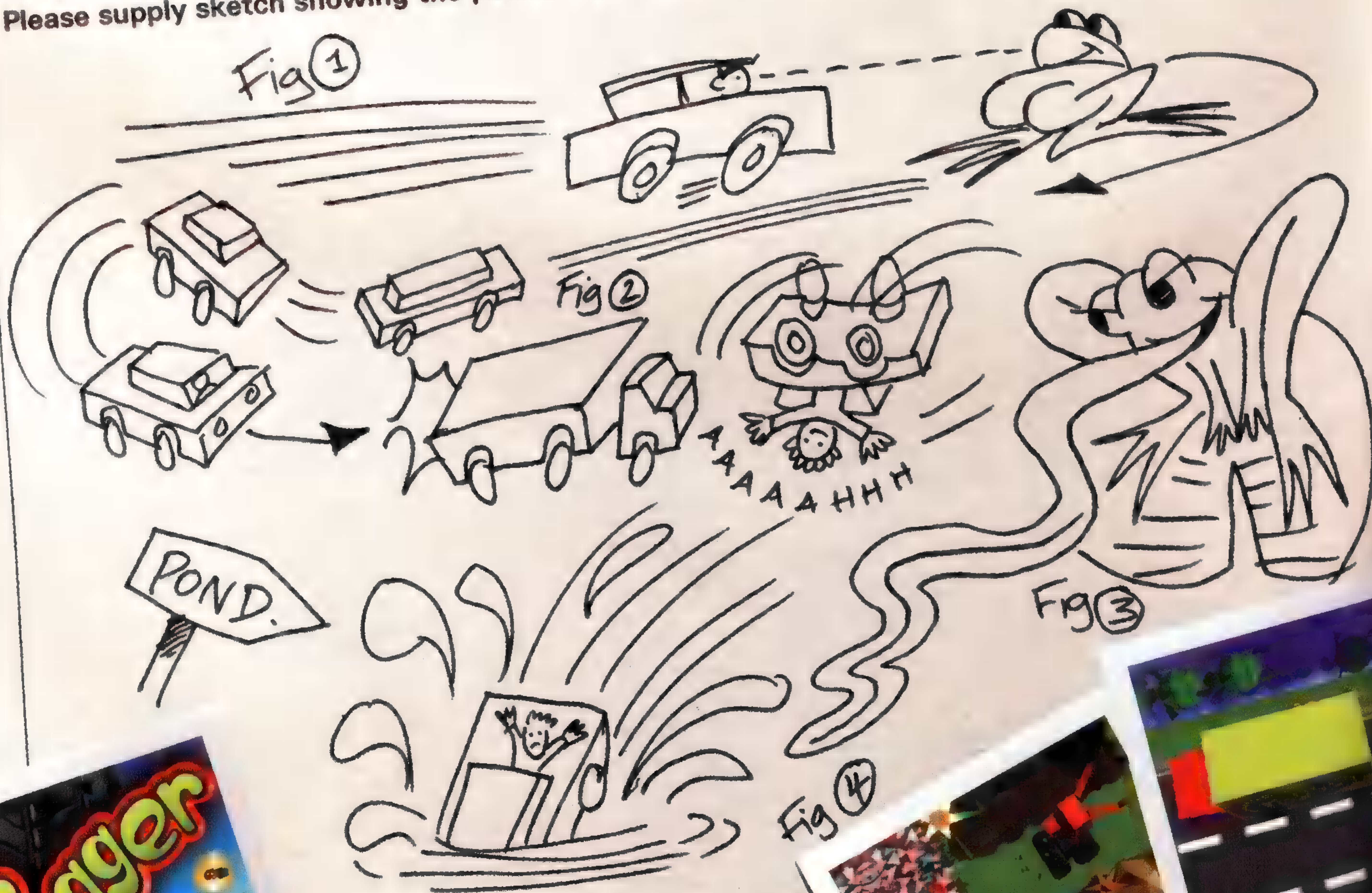
Only at this stage did I notice the truck that was to remove me from the road and deposit me into the pond and do 4 somersaults.

While doing 4 somersaults (with tuck & pike) he added insult to injury by sticking out his heat seeking tongue and giving me a sign implying that 'I was a bad driver'.

Please supply sketch showing the position of vehicles prior and subsequent to collision.



DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT



www.frogger.co.uk

Sid Meier's Gettysburg



Andrew 'The Anorak' Wright reckons he's an expert on war games. We just think he's a sad old git, so we gave him Sid Meier's *Gettysburg* in the hope he'd leave us alone for a week or two...

BEFORE WE START, THERE ARE ONLY three things you need to know about Sid Meier's *Gettysburg*. Firstly, Sid 'Civilisation' Meier had a hand in it, so it must be pretty classy. Secondly, it's about the well-known American civil war battle of Gettysburg (yawn). And thirdly, it represents a pretty radical departure from turn-based computer war games – in other words it's real-time all the way.

Let's face it, the traditional approach to wargaming has always been turn-based: You move, he moves, you move, he moves, and so on. Sometimes it gets more complicated, with defensive fire phases and such-like, but moves are slow, deliberate and carefully planned. A bit like Sid's other masterpiece, *Civilisation*...

In a real-time game, however, things happen around you and the shit hits the fan faster than you can press the Pause button. You can spend ten minutes positioning a gun battery and forming up your best brigade for an assault, only to find that everywhere else is chaos. (How could they get there so



(Left) A full-scale battle underway – just look at that scenery! (Above) The classy menu says it all... (Below) Maximum zoom out gives you a bird's eye view of the whole battlefield, and the carnage therein.

ruddy quickly? I thought I left a regiment guarding that crossing? Oh there they are. That's funny, they're running away. And whose are all those troops? They're certainly not mine. Oh shit, now where's my reserve?).

Gettysburg (the battle) needs little introduction – especially after the rash of other war games, such as *Battleground Gettysburg*. It's a battle that's embedded deep in the American psyche; it was the turning point in a civil war that gave birth to the United States as it is today, and Americans are very proud of it. So just humour them, OK?

You've got living, breathing units rather than wooden blocks of infantry in boring old positions.

The wow factor!

Apart from the delicious artwork on the intro screen, the first thing you see in the game is the menu screen, where you can choose to play a scenario, the full battle, a multi-player game, a tutorial, or load a saved game. A quick click on TUTORIAL leads you gently through the command interface bit by bit. It's confusing at first, and anything but intuitive, but you'll be too busy gawping at the graphics to take in the first lesson properly.

This is what will grab you by the balls and pull you in. The detail is just *amazing*. Units are made up of a dozen or so individual figures, each one beautifully animated at each of the six zoom levels available. To be frank, it's light years ahead of anything we've seen before. The soldiers move, load, fire, walk and run whenever ordered – and they don't do it in unison, but as individual figures.

You've suddenly got living, breathing units rather than wooden blocks of infantry in the same old boring firing





(Above) The interface is a joy to use.
(Right) Zoom into close-up and you get the same terrific level of detail.



positions. They stand, fire, re-load and leg it, depending on their morale levels, although most of the time they'll try and carry out their orders. The atmosphere is superbly realistic too, with voiced commands floating at intervals over the din of battle. Every order you make is echoed by the sergeants and officers and punctuated by volleys of rifle fire, artillery and other sound effects. As a gaming experience it's not to be missed. The units (regiments or batteries) are controlled by brigade commanders who can move several units under their control at once, although each regiment can be quickly detached and placed on its own if things get bad. (You can always re-attach them with a single mouse click later).

The projected or actual positions of the units are indicated as rectangles pointing in the appropriate direction whenever you click on the brigade commander, so you can see at a glance the disposition of each brigade. It spoils the gorgeous 3D landscape, but so what? It's nice to know what the hell's going on occasionally.

Although the command interface is well thought out, it's all too easy to lose control at times and give up. Only moving your leader to a quiet location and rallying can get your brigade back into any resemblance of order - unless the troops are engaged with the enemy or busy hoofing it back home to the barracks. I'd be the last person to say this was unrealistic, although the word 'frustration' should be underlined and in capitals...

Shock horror!

First of all, the big shock. You can't play the full *Gettysburg* game from start to finish. *Gettysburg* was three days of bitter fighting, building up gradually from a small clash to the

climactic Pickett's Charge. No gamer could hope to control all that in real time, so it looks like Sid decided not to give them the chance. The 'full battle' is, instead, a step-by-step set of scenarios building up towards the later events. Some do get large but there's no way you can fight the whole thing at one sitting. It's not a campaign either - you can lose almost an entire regiment in one scenario and find that it's increased in size the next.

Shock number two is that the cavalry won't stay on their horses under fire, which means that you can't charge the enemy on horseback. Now, I'd be the first to admit that cavalry very rarely charged unbroken infantry in the American civil war, unless they had some kind of death wish, but occasionally it would be nice to be able to pursue routing units. Their only real use is as a fast-moving reserve.

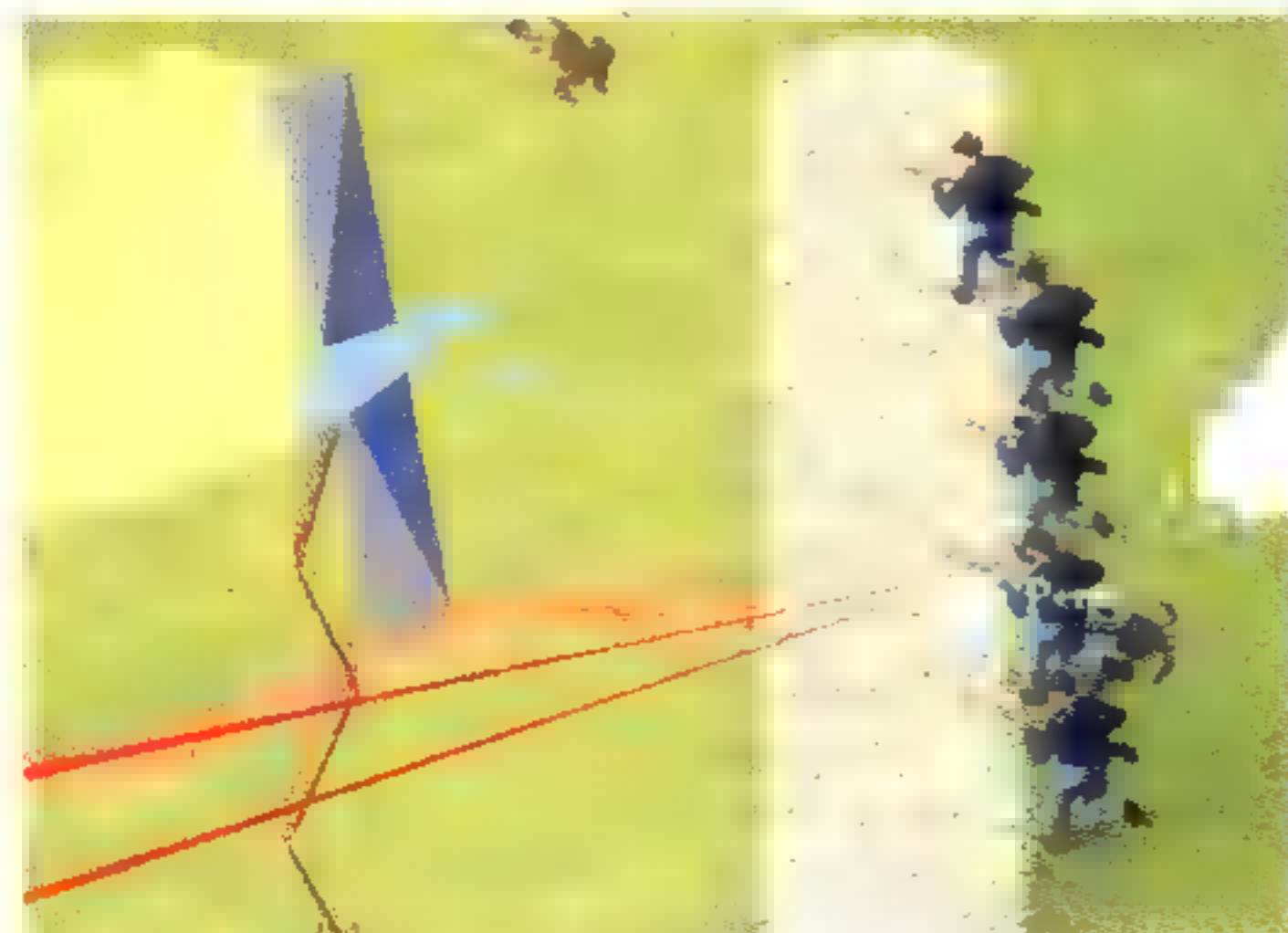
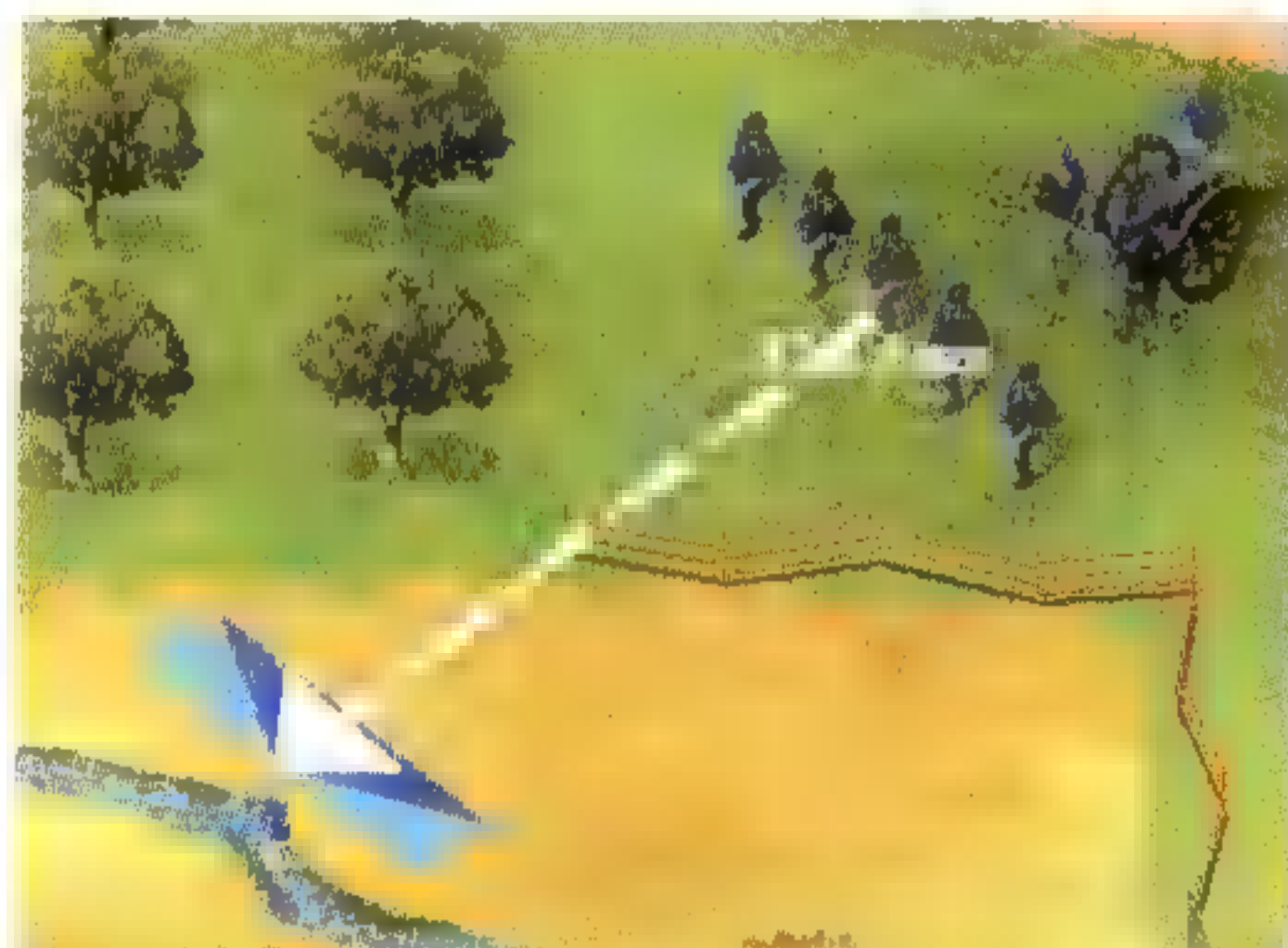
Another good feature is the 25 scenarios you can choose from, plus a random scenario generator that will give you games ad infinitum (or ad nauseam, depending on your point of view). These

can be skirmishes or big battles, it's up to you. One thing that sets the game aside from the rest is that you can view the battle from eight different points of the compass. Without a doubt this is the best-looking wargame since hexes and cardboard counters were invented, and one of the most challenging too.

Ignore the disjointed campaign-style approach and the fact that you can't fight the entire battle. With its multi-player

support across networks, serial links and the Internet, it'll almost certainly take the games charts by storm and it deserves every little bit of it.

I want to see more effective cavalry in version 1.01, and I want to have a shot at the big one all on my own, no matter how slow it is. But as I said earlier, there are only three things you need to know about *Gettysburg*. It's brilliant, it's realistic and I've got a copy... **Z**



(Left to right) Most movement orders are carried out using the mouse. Simply highlight the unit and drag towards the destination. Holding down the 'O' key means a unit will keep the same facing when it reaches its destination. More complex commands are possible, too. This unit in column is ordered to advance and form a skirmish line by dragging with the mouse and pressing the 'S' key for skirmish.

In Perspective

But which perspective? There's so many from which we can approach this. Dilemma? You bet. Microprose's *Fields of Glory* was the first attempt at a real-time 3D wargame but it's well past its sell-by date. The *Battleground* series are, of course, simply excellent but when set against Sid Meier's *Gettysburg*, they look like toytown stuff.

Sid Meier's *Gettysburg*

Battleground Gettysburg

Fields of Glory

Fast Speed

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: SVGA/256 colours minimum

Sound: Any Win95 supported card

Controls: Mouse, keyboard



Score

If it's possible to cross a *Battleground* game with *C&C* and still have some adrenalin left, this has got to be as close as it gets.

90

Price: £tba

Release date: October

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Telephone: 01753 549 442

Web site: www.firaxis.com

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"An essential purchase."

9.7/10

LOADED

"One of the best games we've ever seen."

90%



"A killer of a car game... dead smart."

88%



"Great fun... leaves you screaming with laughter and terror."

GOLD AWARD

GAMES DOMAIN

Gold Award

"The most impressive racing game around"

Scores and quotes taken from reviews of the full version of Carmageddon.

OFFICIAL DATA DISC - REQUIRES ORIGINAL CARMAGEDDON

7th Legion

Always ready to cast a critical eye over any C&C clone, **Richie Shoemaker** is just glad to find one that doesn't have the word 'dark' in the title.



Look at what you can build, and that's not a bouncy castle.

IF YOU HAVE EVER BECOME IMMERSED IN the *Warhammer 40,000* universe, you should immediately recognise all the units featured in *7th Legion* – you may even think there's been a breach of patent, copyright or whatever.

From Space Marine-type soldiers to the Titan-esque AC's (mechs), not only have developers, Epic, disregarded their duty for original gameplay but they've plumped for ripping-off Games Workshop's model design too. Oh well, that surely means they can concentrate on some thumping action. Surely?

In this real-time strategy game, the focus lies more upon action than resource management. The Chosen have returned to reclaim the Earth and the *7th Legion* are there to stop them. Choosing either side you can command loads of units over countless missions and hey, surprise surprise, there are many buildings to build and multi-player games to er, well, multiplay.

So apart from the soft action centre, what crispy coating does *7th Legion* offer that would make you pick it first from a bag of C&C's (C&C Clones)? Well, for starters, there are 'battle cards', a sort of cross between magic spells and Monopoly's Community Chest that can turn the course of a battle for the better – if you're lucky. Whilst this is a new innovation that adds an extra dimension to the combat, the battle cards can be as infuriating as they are innovative. Your entire infantry can be wiped out if you're on the receiving end of a 'Doom Fist'. The cards are a nice idea, but maybe they could have been implemented better. In addition to the standard set-up, more flavour is added in later missions with larger scale infantry running around corridors. The radar also has a cool infra-red display, but it's just not as technically advanced as either *Dark Reign* or *Total Annihilation*.

The graphics are colourful and uncluttered and the landscapes are simple with none of

that line-of-sight malarkey seen in other C&C's. Ultimately, it all gets just a bit samey due to the lack of resource management. Because there is no foraging for minerals (you kick off with a wad of cash to deplete), you only really explore to kick arse, so instead of small-scale skirmishes, you tend to indulge in huge sprawling battles. Sub-missions do appear, requesting you to kill six enemy units for 30,000 credits, but apart from that, it's simply build 'n' go.

Directing a large number of units across the meandering maps can mean a few get stuck behind trees. Enemy units are also prone to just standing next to one of your buildings without attacking it, only springing into action when something more mobile comes into view. Ropy AI does not help the cause, especially when combat involves loads of units that need constant attention.

At the end of a long day, *7th Legion* is very easy to pick up and good for a quick blast but it's not worth losing your job over. Unless this sort of thing really greases your plank you'd be better off looking at *Total Annihilation* and *Dark Reign*. The only games this would beat in a fight are *Counter Action* and *Dark Colony* and even against the latter it would no doubt limp away with a bloody nose.



(Above) This level's only just started. You can't hang about in this game. Well you could, but it's not advised. Oh no.
(Above right) *7th Legion* has some gorgeous looking units. These Titans (Oops sorry, AC's) really do kick ass.

In Perspective

It's the closest you'll get to *Warhammer 40K* on the PC. The battle cards and the focus on action make *7th Legion* a little different, but sadly it all could have been implemented better, especially the AI. If you want something a bit more taxing you know where to go.

Red Alert

Total Annihilation

Dark Reign

7th Legion

Dark Colony

Counter Action

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P30

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, Keys



Score

Good fun, but a bit dumb

72

Price: £ 29.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: MicroProse

Telephone: 01454 893 893

Website: www.microprose.com

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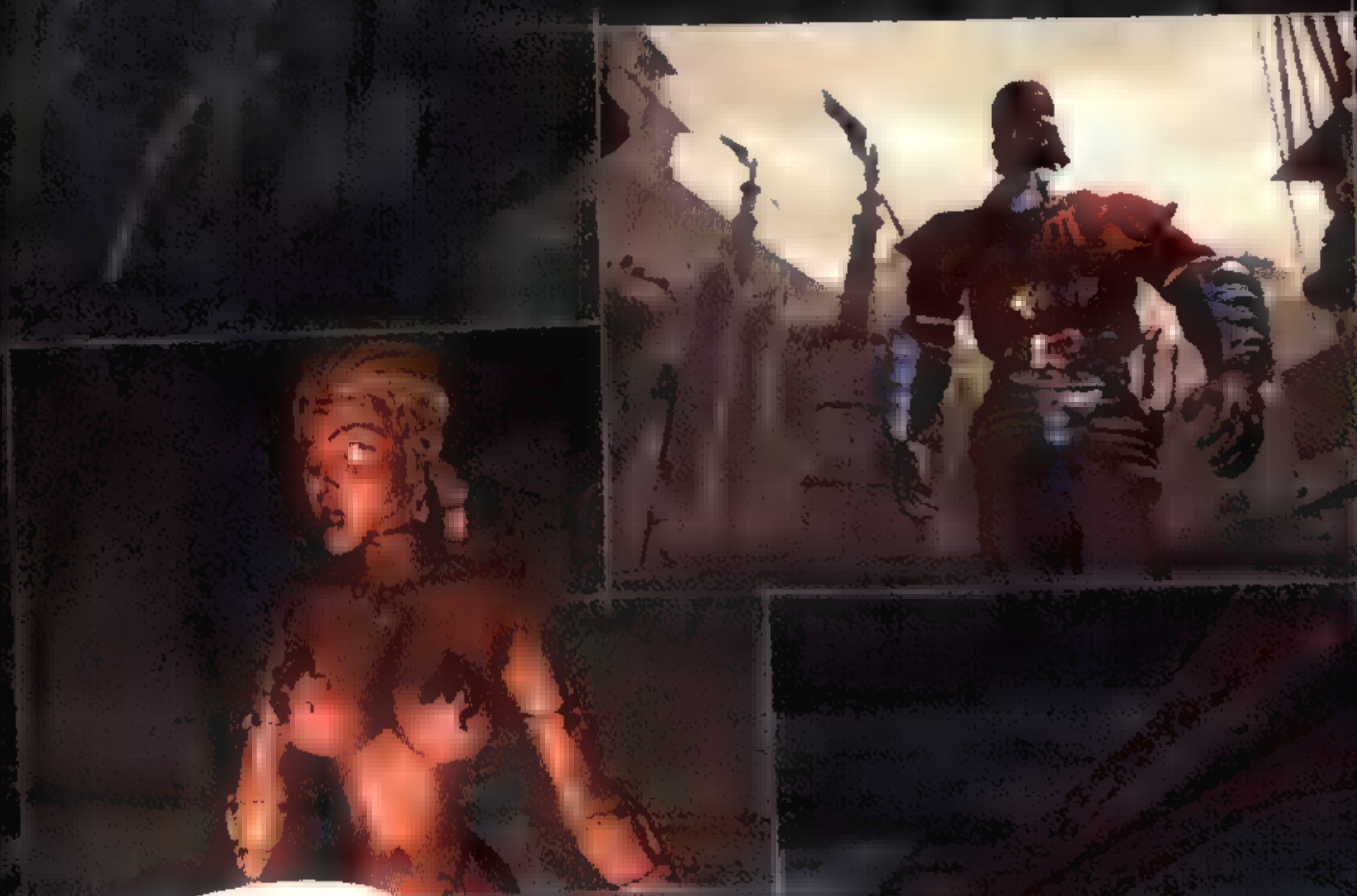
PC GAMING WORLD

"...one of the most beautiful and technically impressive games we have seen for a very, very long time...should appeal to many gamers who wouldn't normally be attracted to the adventure genre..."

PC ZONE

"...visually stunning...the most detailed and atmospheric 3D adventure game I have ever seen..."

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH



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<http://www.darkearth.com>

MICRO PROSE

<http://www.microprose.com>

Review ZONE Extra!

And now to the games that we didn't want to give a whole page to, or those that came in late. Can you guess which is which?



There wasn't a cloud in the sky as David Essex tootled back to Romford.

MANX TT

This game was originally developed by Sega for their fading Saturn console. It sold fairly well, but then Saturn owners aren't exactly spoiled for choice when it comes to class sports games, so we won't read too much into that. How it will fair on PC is perhaps more questionable. Bike racers have never done particularly well on PC, and this

one is pretty much standard fare for the genre. Choose your bike, choose your track, and zoom around the track with all the other bikers. Admittedly, this 3Dfx-enhanced version looks much better than its Saturn counterpart, but the gameplay is more or less the same. In fact it's identical to the Saturn version. You may not think this is a big deal, but when you consider



that most of Sega's other Saturn-to-PC ports have been merely okay, this is quite an achievement. If you like your arcade racers fast and fairly undemanding, you'll be reasonably happy with *Manx TT*, but gamers looking for more of a long-term challenge will be disappointed. If you really want it, wait 'til it's on budget.

Chris Anderson

Publisher: Pygmalion
Tel: 0151 282 3000
Price: £39.99

70

The rather underwhelming *Man O War*. If you want to play a pirate game then wait for *Overboard*.

and some nice video footage. Then you assemble your fleet, give them their orders and plan your attack. Then you're left saying "Now what?", and the answer is "That's it". You're taken to a 3D environment where you can watch your ships fighting (the graphics would have looked dated 18 months ago), and then you give more orders. It's just like playing a spreadsheet. There's no resource management, no diplomacy, in fact nothing you would expect of a strategy game (that I could see). If this had been released as Shareware it would be bad, but as a full product, it really is a load of rubbish. Not recommended.

Daniel Emery

MAN O WAR

Man O War is a sailing strategy game set in the time of Jolly Jack Tars and pirates. The principle of the game is simple: co-ordinate your fleet of frigates, man of wars and other flotsam, and demolish the enemy. And....er...that's about it. You start the game with a pretty looking front end,



Publisher: TBC
Tel: (0114) 846 3000
Price: £TBC

12

PC Zone classic

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK

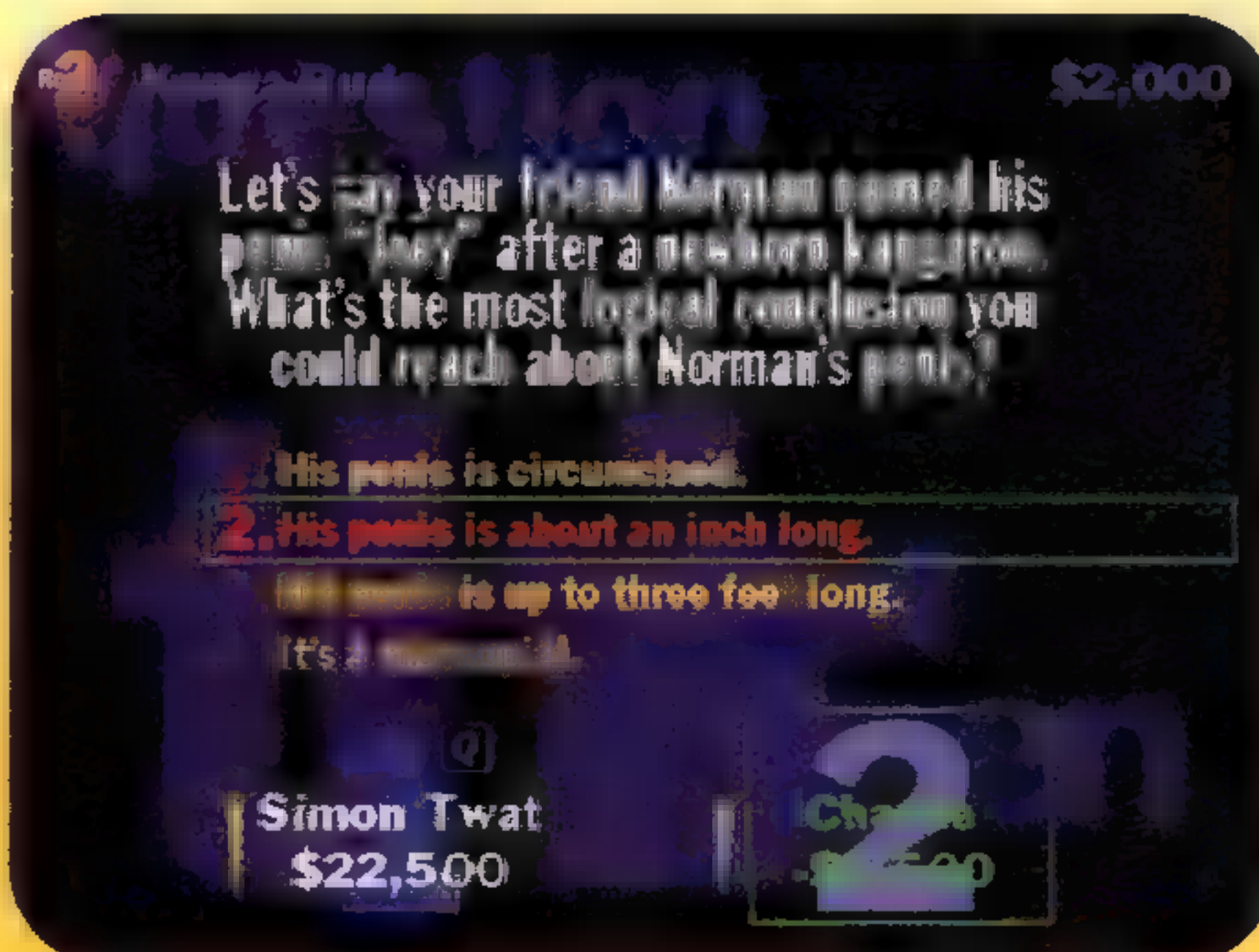
You may remember *You Don't Know Jack* from issue 35. A trivia-based game show style affair from the States. Well this is the UK version, voiced by several British comedians (including Paul Kaye - aka Dennis Pennis, and Mel and Sue from C4's *Light Lunch*) and has a typically British slant to some of the questions. It's quite simply brilliant.

Part of the attraction is the superb presentation. I have never played a game that flows so smoothly from one segment to another, from the opening set-up procedure ("Okay, lose the desktop!") to the mid-question commentaries ("You're a winner in the game but you're still a loser in life").

But the key is that YDKJ is just superb fun. I played a game against *Zone's* Publisher John, and by the end we had both been reduced to quivering

heaps of laughter. A few people that remembered the US version have said that they preferred that one, but having tried both I can only assume it comes down to personal taste. I found the typically sarcastic and ironic UK humour to be far more satisfying.

700 questions on the CD ensure that you'll get



plenty of life out of it - particularly good if you've got the olds over at Christmas), but even if your grandpa is the biggest brain since Magnus Magnusson, and gets through that lot before you've even finished the Christmas Pud and brandy butter, that can be extended by playing on-line via YDKJ's website, where new episodes are put up each week. You are forced to play the US version and have to endure real commercial breaks every fifteen minutes or so, but the fact that real cash prizes are on offer really make it worth sticking with.

I can't recommend this game highly enough. *You Don't Know Jack* is a brilliant game. Plain and simple.

Paul Presley

Publisher: BMG Interactive
Tel: 0171 384 7500
Price: £39.99

91



WARNING!

RISK OF CONTAMINATION

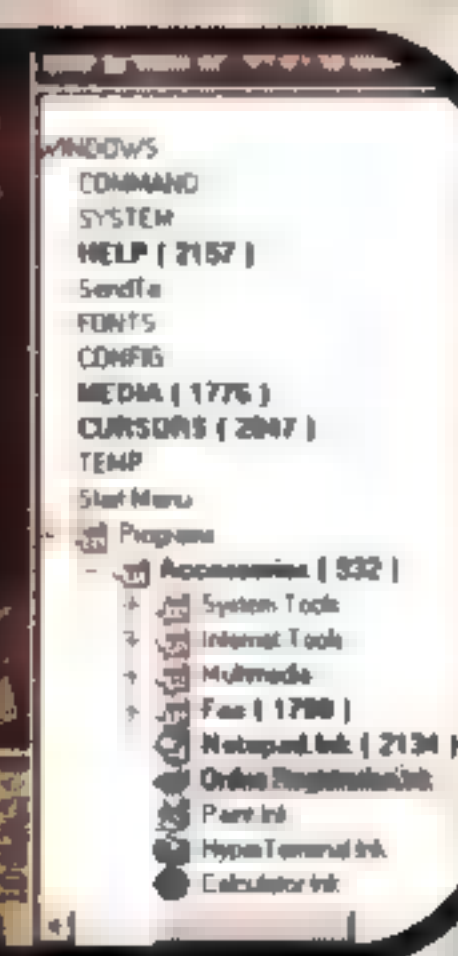
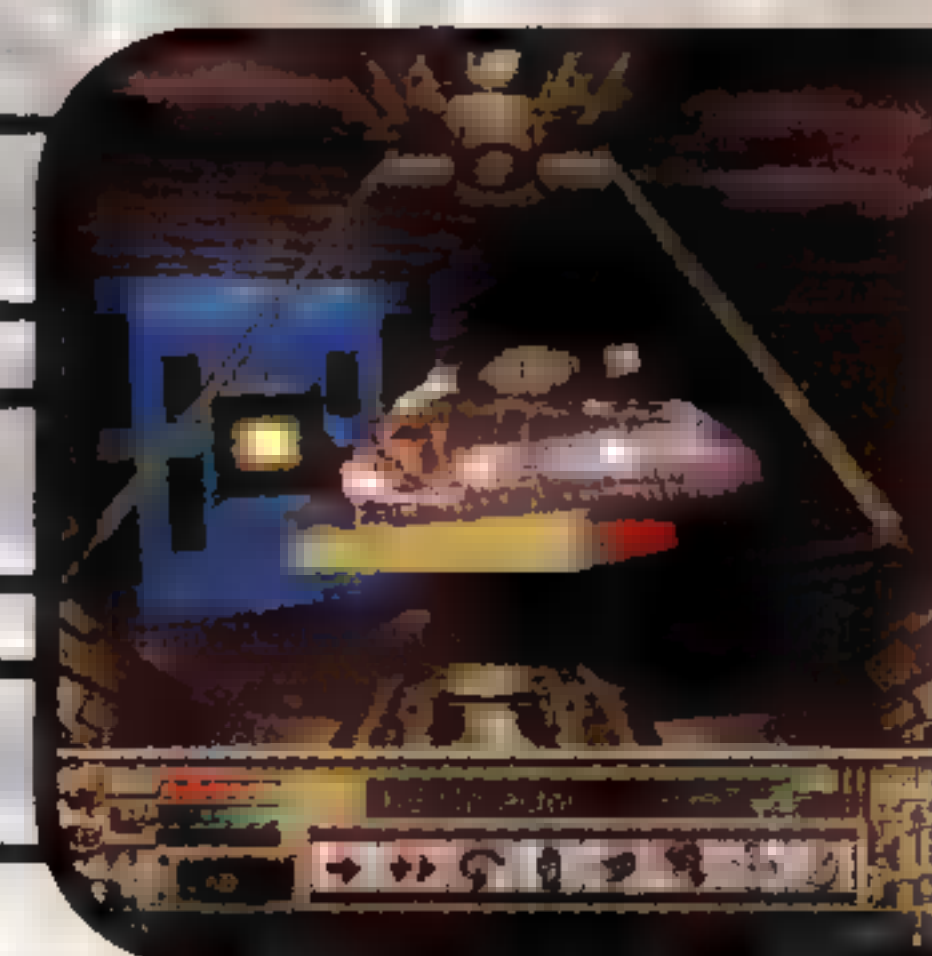
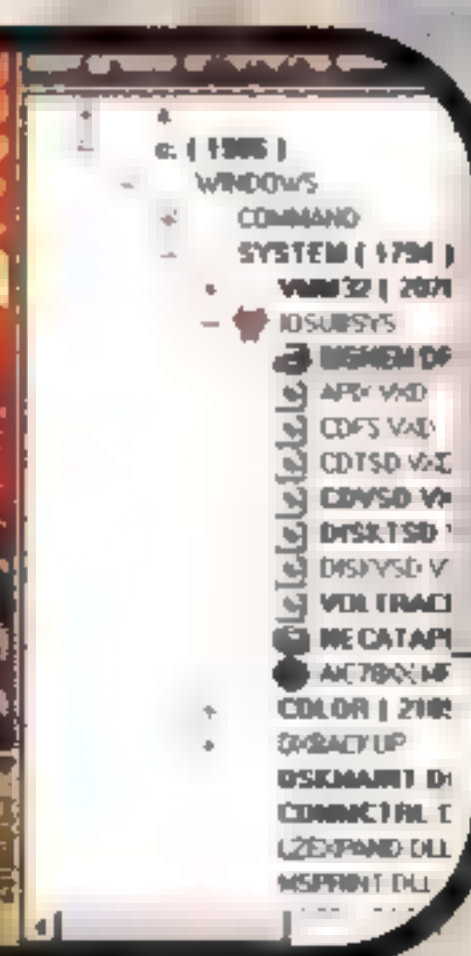


VIRUS™



**"COULD SPREAD
LIKE THE PLAGUE"
PC REVIEW**

VIRUS



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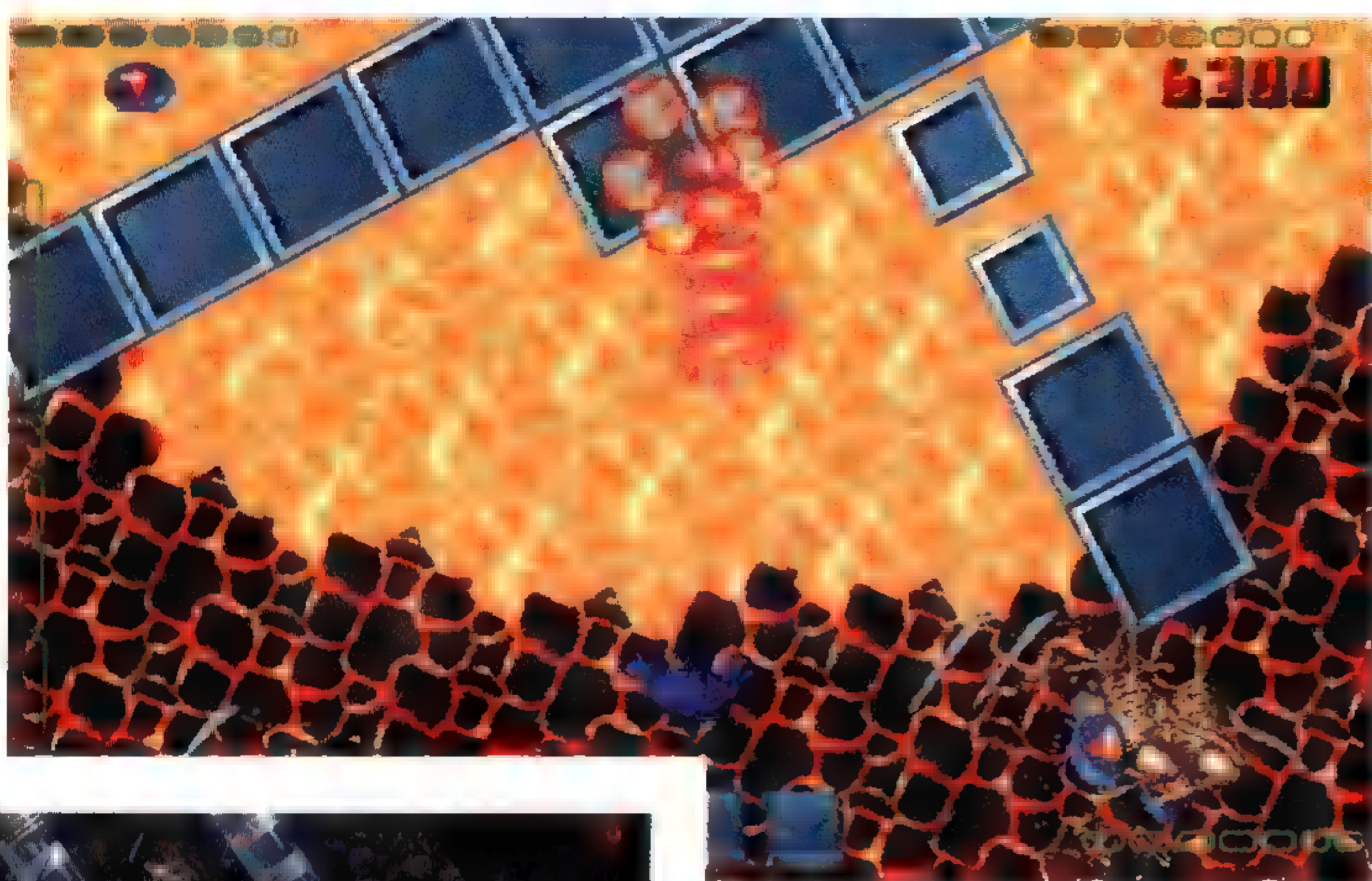
WIN 95



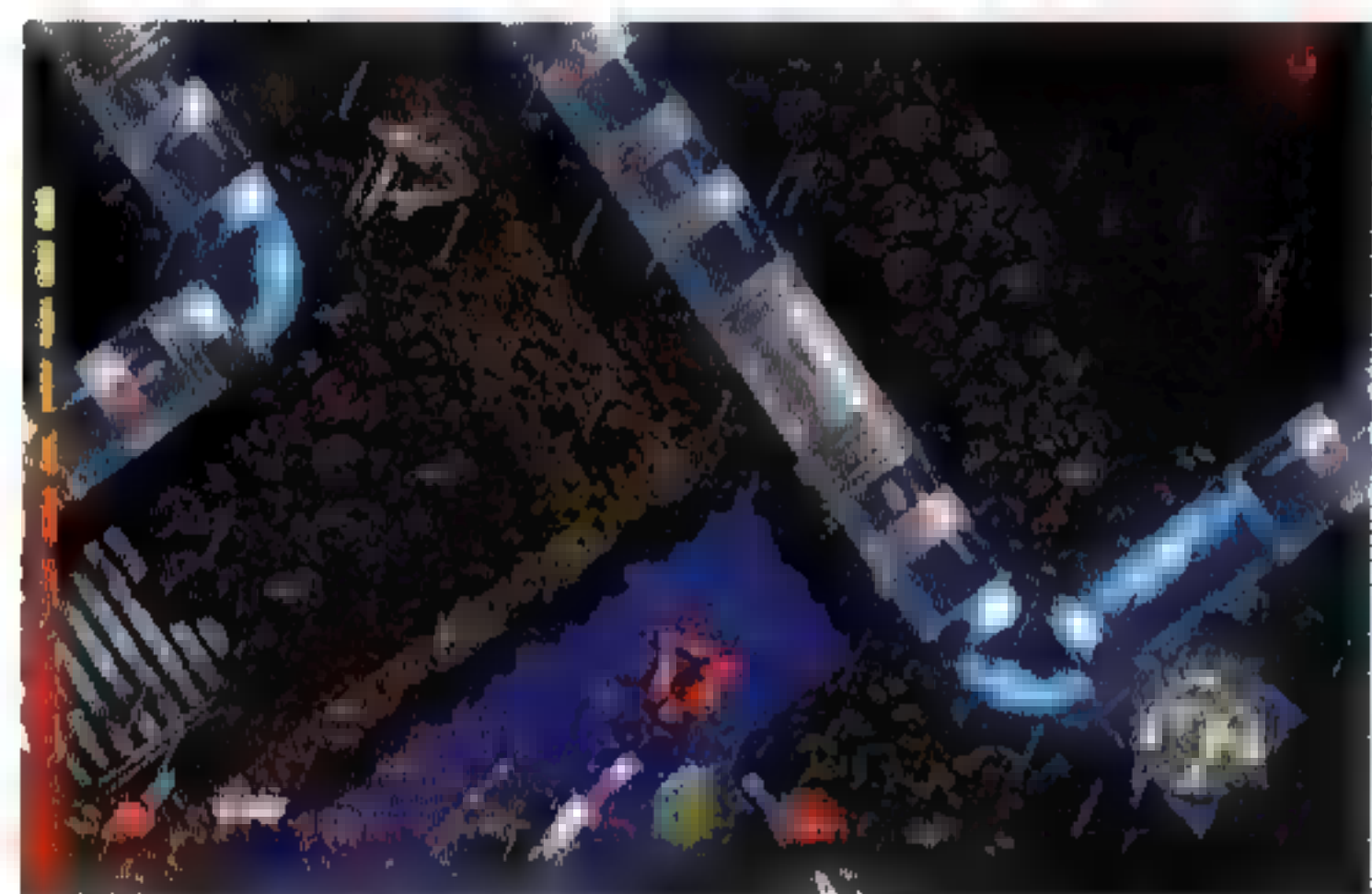
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Project Paradise: ■ game destined to star in one of those bargain compilations very soon.



PROJECT PARADISE

Top down shoot 'em ups seem to be making a bit of a comeback at the moment, and while *Mageslayer* manages to just about cut the mustard, this German effort trips over the rim of the pot, misses the mustard completely and falls headfirst into a prickly bush.

Aside from killing everyone, the aim of the game is for you, a three-in-one mean machine, to get to the Cyberlink station and shut down Project Paradise. During the game you can morph into either Raven the warrior, Damian the magician or Quicksilver the hacker, and it's pretty obvious that you'll need to change characters to progress through the game. Unfortunately, the controls are pretty unresponsive and the main character moves about like the Editor after eight pints of Kronenberg and ■ kebab on a Friday night. While the graphics can best be described as adequate, even our beast of a P200 had problems running the game smoothly in hi-res. In fact, the only redeeming feature is the spinning landscape, which rotates with the main character in much the same way as it does in *Take No Prisoners*. Big deal! Oh, did I mention that this was German? You'll not be expecting to see any gobs of blood then. Not even green goo.

This is the gaming equivalent of Kajagoogoo; all hair and tight trousers. (Don't worry, though, there's no sign of Limahl). Some people probably like that sort of thing. Suffice to say that no one in the PC Zone office did. Not even the security guard.

Richie Shoemaker

Publisher: Alternative Software
Tel: 01977 797777
Price: £29.99

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Excalibur: Well it's not quite up to the standard of *Tomb Raider II* now, is it?

EXCALIBUR 2555AD

Anything that's remotely successful is bound to inspire a smattering of imitators. Considering the number of C&C and *Quake* clones doing the rounds, it's surprising we haven't seen a *Tomb Raider*-a-like before now. Well here's one. It's called *Excalibur*, it's an adaptation of a successful PlayStation game, and you need a 3D accelerator card to get the most out of it.

At first glance, you could be forgiven for thinking you were watching some kind of secret *Tomb Raider* level starring Lara Croft's sister. Not only does the lead character look strikingly similar to Core's megastar (save her hairdo, which is a blonde

bob), there's also an incredibly familiar floating 'camera' which follows her around. The gameplay is quite similar too, with plenty of running hither and thither, collecting objects, solving puzzles and murdering people.

So it's similar, but is it as good? Er, no. *Excalibur* bears the same relation to *Tomb Raider* as *No Way Sis* do to *Oasis*. For starters, the animation isn't ■ patch on *Tomb Raider*. Nor are the puzzles. The controls are slightly unwieldy, especially during fight sequences, which tend to be about as fast-moving and exciting as your average Enya video. Instead of huge,

hulking levels, *Excalibur*'s various stages comprise a series of small rooms, joined together via high-tech sliding doors. There's no jump button, so it isn't ■ 3D platform game. In fact, save the female lead, *Excalibur 2555AD* doesn't really have much in common with *Tomb Raider* at all.

A pretty, yet curiously uninvolved title that's better suited to the PSX than the PC. I wish I had something nicer to say about it, since the programming team (who insist on thanking no-one save "the little 24 hour garage at the top of the road" and "the slightly smaller Chinese just

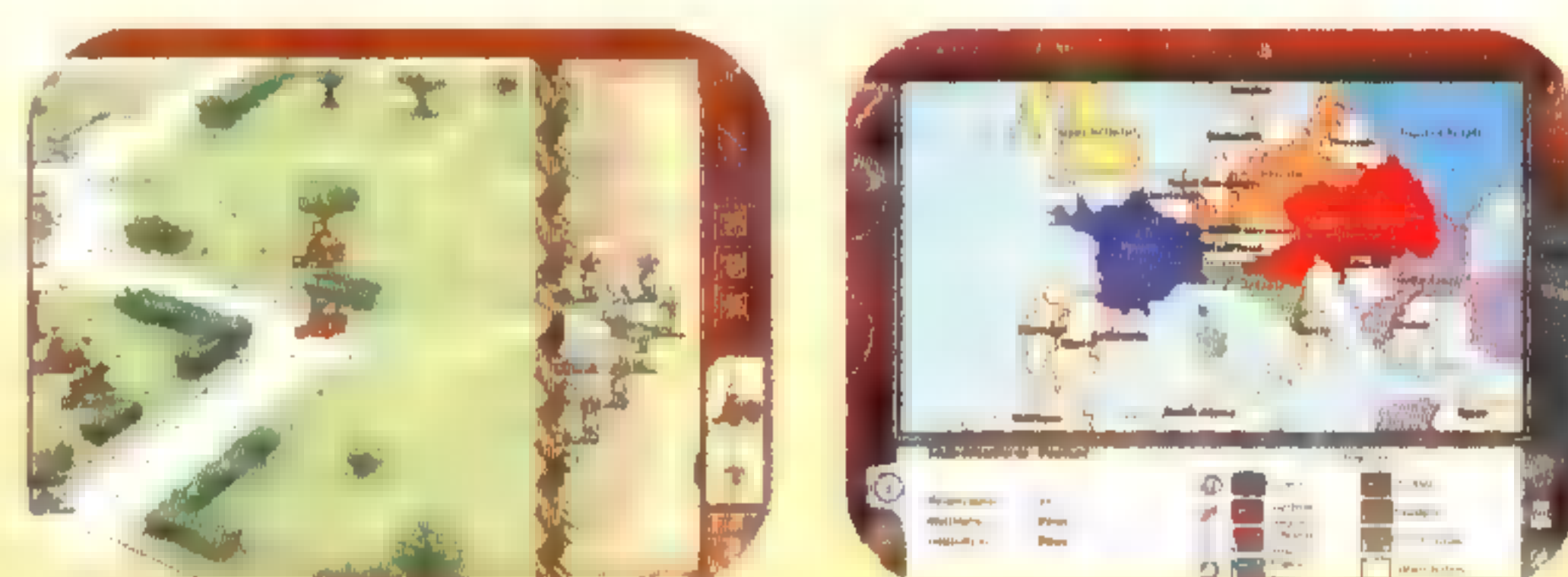
PC Zone recommends



IMPERIALISM

When you first look at *Imperialism*, you could be forgiven for thinking that its designers played *Civilization* ■ fair bit in their youth. All the ingredients are here: resource management, army building, diplomacy *et al*. However, the game is set in a much smaller time frame: the period of the Industrial Revolution, and the golden age of steam.

You start off with ■ single city, ■ couple of prospectors and some cottage industries, and your brief is to "expand



the city, build an army and conquer the world". Not the most original of plots, but still fun.

Combat takes the form of a turn-based tile affair, although there is an auto-play option if should happen to want to concentrate on the resource management aspect of the game.

Imperialism isn't full of FMV and animations, so it should run fine on a 486DX2 (not everyone has a P200), but the game environment is really atmospheric and can easily lead to bags-under-your-eyes, ten hour non-stop gaming sessions. In ■ nutshell, it's addictive as hell. Buy it — let me assure you, you won't be disappointed.

Daniel Emery

Publisher: Mindscape /SSI
Tel: 01444 246333
Price: £39.99

85

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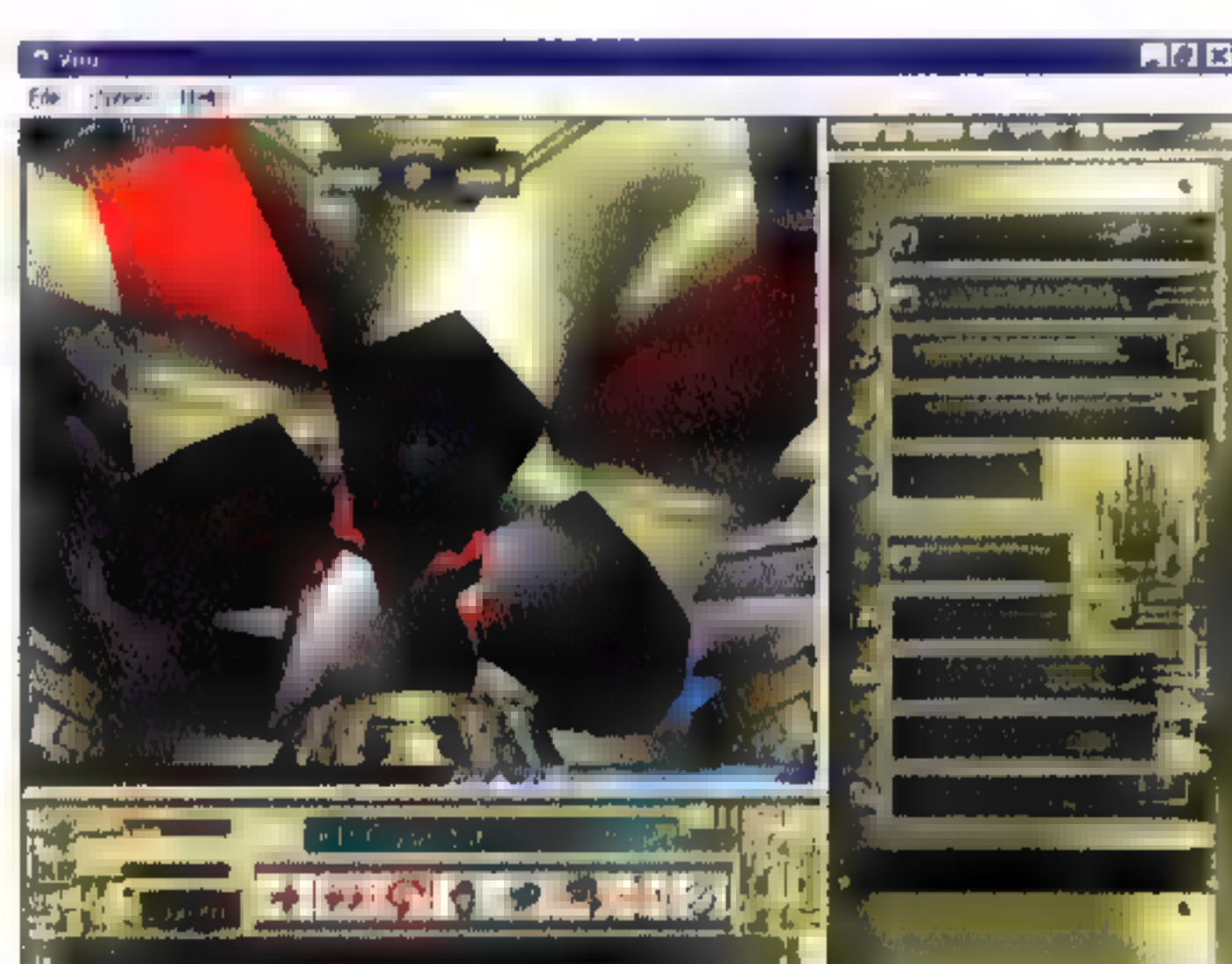
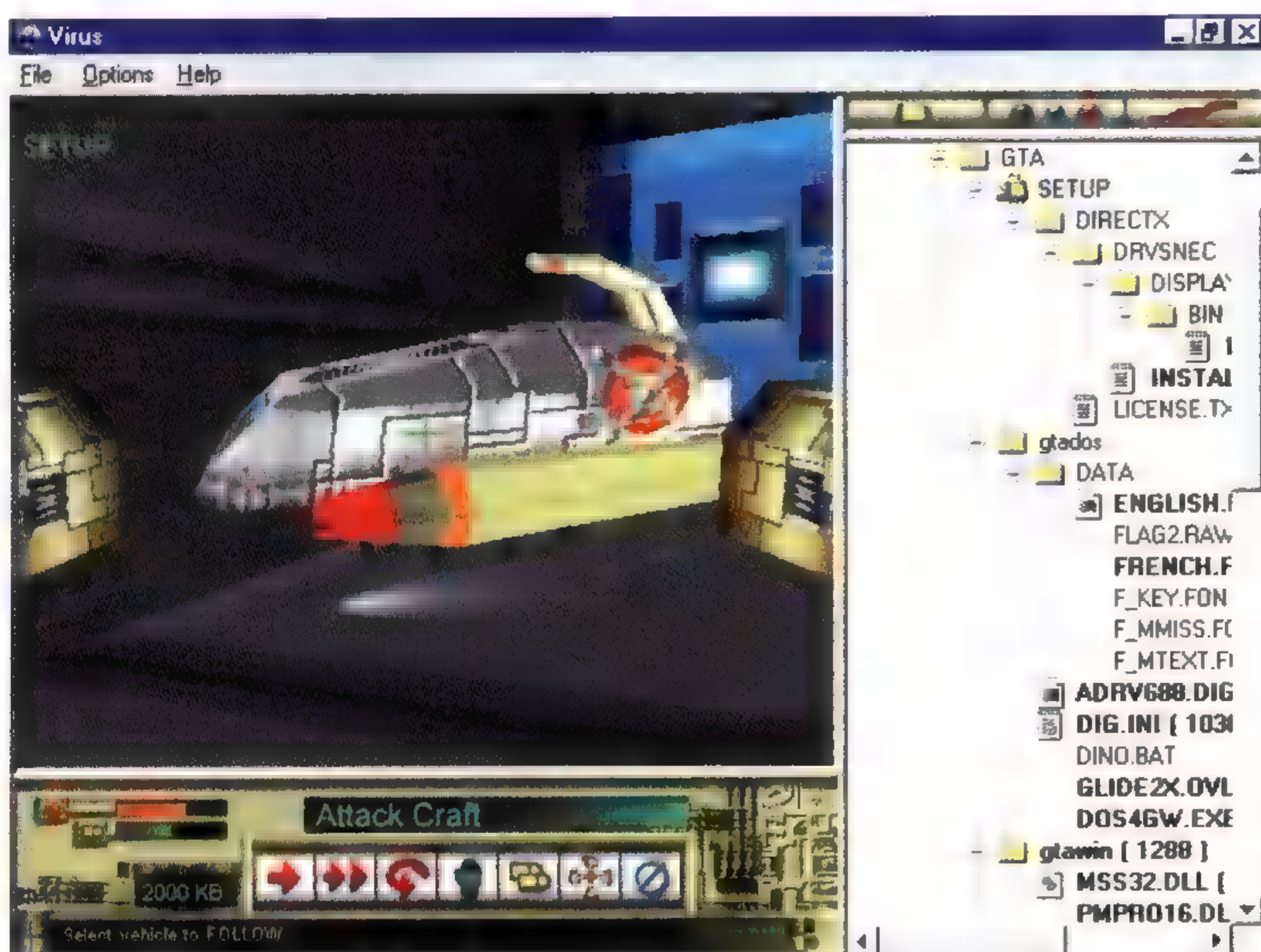
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GOALS

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There's a voucher in the box that offers a fiver off VDS Pro Antivirus, which is a good idea. At £39.99 Virus is still thirty-five quid over the odds.

VIRUS

Virus is a bit of a weird game. Weird in that it's a very easy game to get the wrong impression of. It looks a bit like Descent in places, a bit like Windows Explorer in others, but plays more like C&C than any of the aforementioned games or utilities. The aim of the game is to go out into a mirror of your directory tree (your real directory tree, as set up on your hard drive) and fight off a creeping infection from a virus-like race of creatures. Files have to be

Publisher: Telstar/Fish
Web site: www.telstar.co.uk
Price: £TBC

69



Charon tried to remain inconspicuous, but couldn't quite get the walk right.



PERFECT ASSASSIN

Perfect Assassin is a sort of cross between yer traditional point 'n' click adventure and yer traditional 3D shoot-em-up. It's entirely controlled by the mouse. Click somewhere and the hero, Charon (which sounds uncomfortably close to Sharon to me), will stroll gainfully towards that point. Click on an object and he'll examine it. Right-click and he blows it to smithereens. So far, so predictable.

'mined' to build up resources, which in turn allows the player to construct more vehicles and bases along the way.

The game is played out in a series of samey tunnels, some of which adorn themselves with actual BMPs found littering your hard drive, which is neat (although make sure you shift your porn collection before showing it to Dad). WAV files encountered on the way will also get played. Coo.

That's about it for kicks. The rest of the game is confusionsville, dullsville and arseville, in that order. The presentation is dreadful. The revolving 3Dfx logo prior to the game boosts expectations, but even with acceleration the game looks dated. Gameplay is slow and tedious. It takes yonks to get used to controlling ships by hand, and directing them doesn't work as well as it should.

Paul Mallinson

The action itself is confined to a small window which takes up the top half of the screen, with the bottom half being reserved for icons, inventories, conversational asides and all that palaver. Unusually, the player spies the proceedings from a vantage point similar to the 'camera view' mode in Duke Nukem; whenever Charon threatens to stride manfully out of view, the camera legs it after him and chooses a new angle. Quite neat and all that, but unfortunately it's the only real innovation on show here. Grolier have made much of the fact that Kev Smith - a superb comic

Publisher: Telstar
Tel: 01932 222232
Price: £39.99

49

PC Zone almost recommends

SPEEDBOAT ATTACK

"Imagine the brute force of skull crushing acceleration, speeds that encroach on Einstein's fundamental laws of physics, and braking that produces more negative G's than even a fighter pilot experiences", intones the portentous copy on the back of the box. It continues: "Now imagine all this power transferred to the chassis of the most brutal, manoeuvrable and downright scary power boats ever conceived." An ominous pause, a dramatic chord, then the conclusion: "This is Speedboat Attack."



Don't know about you, but I damn near shat myself.

It's a pity, then, that the game itself is considerably less exciting than the blurb boasts. The concept is promising: a high-speed, no-holds-barred river race featuring the aforementioned powerboats, which are equipped with machine guns and rocket launchers to boot. All this, and an impressive number of different courses, including one called "Scandinavian Ring", which sounds suspiciously like a marital device or a particularly squalid porno flick to me. 3Dfx-compatible cards are fully supported, and alongside the six-player network play option there's also a split-screen two player mode (now there's something we don't see enough of these days).

So where does it go wrong? Well, there are several little problems which, when combined, add up to a pretty lacklustre experience. The graphics, while undeniably crisp and smoothly animated, are functional and unexciting. The river itself doesn't behave like 'real' water; despite the fact that there's loads of 'downright scary powerboats' churning their way round the course, there are no rolling waves, no violent, bobbing wakes, just still, placid liquid. What we're left with is basically a flattened and waterlogged version of Wipeout 2097, minus



the pretty lighting effects. It isn't awful by any means, but messing-about-on-the-river fans would be well advised to wait until Promethean Studio's Powerboat - a similar game, but with 'proper' waves - which sees the light of day in about a month.

Charlie Brooker

Publisher: Telstar/Fish
Web site: www.telstar.co.uk
Price: £TBC

69

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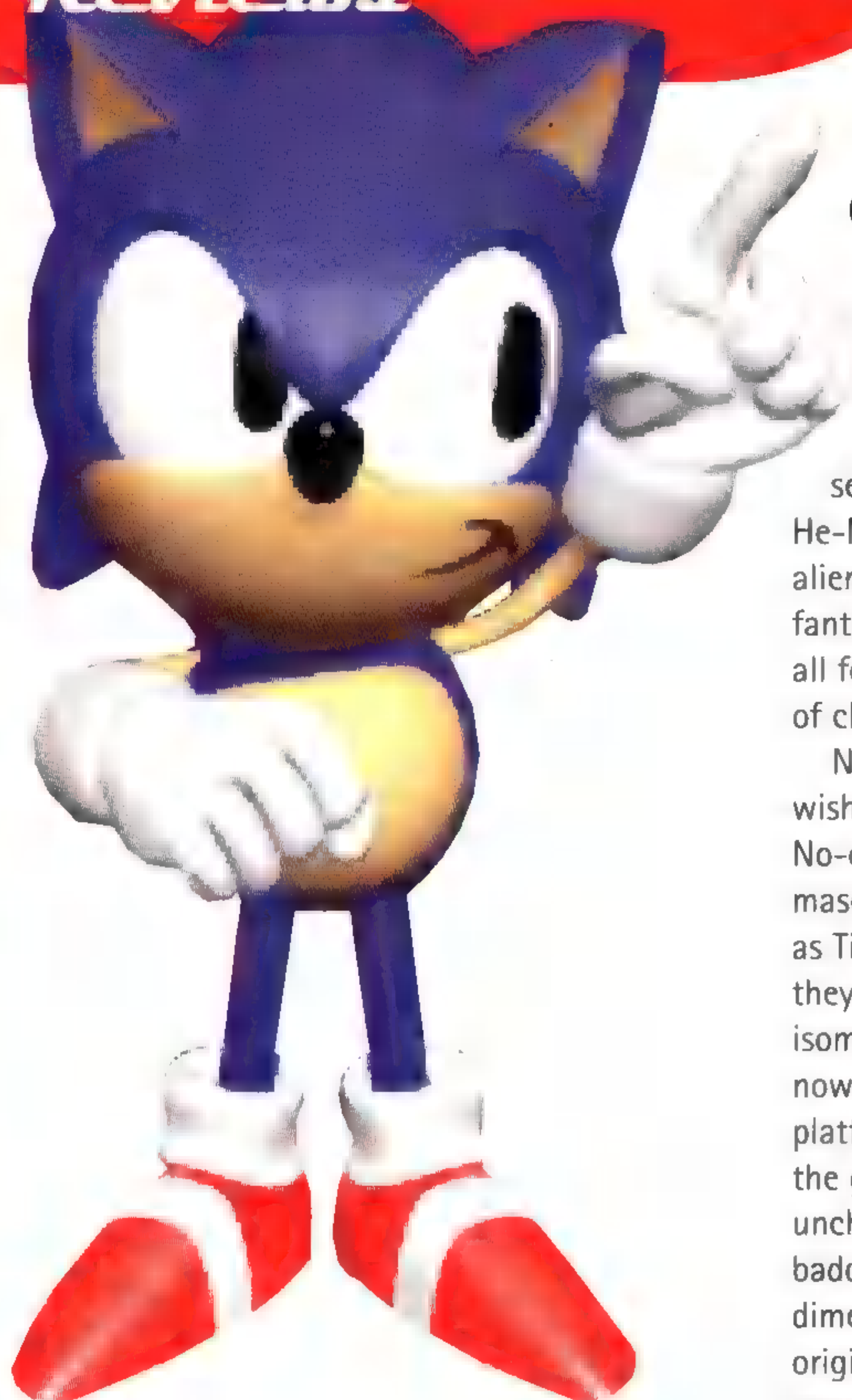
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(Left) Sonic's back - We'll avoid making any prick jokes so as not to cause offense.

generation of drippy-nosed, selfish toddler scumbags. Think of He-Man, Metal Mickey, Gilbert the alien and Timmy Mallet. Three fantastical creations, one braying oaf - all four of them sacrificed on the altar of childhood trends.

Naturally, this is a fate Sega don't wish to befall Sonic the Hedgehog. No-one wants to see their company mascot discussed in the same context as Timmy Mallet, which is why they've produced *Sonic 3D*, an isometric update of the once-popular, now-forgotten series of Megadrive platform games. Whilst the nature of the gameplay remains largely unchanged (collect rings, avoid or kill baddies, spin like a top etc), the two-dimensional sprites and levels of the original are gone, and in their place come pre-rendered models and forced-perspective playing areas. Fine, you might think. It isn't.

The problems are manifold. There's the control system for one thing - it's almost impossible to steer Sonic in the direction you want, especially if you use the keyboard. The graphics may mark a technical improvement, but they're hardly advanced (polygons would've been nicer) and worse still, they lack the charm of the original efforts. And finally there's the gameplay itself, which is slower-paced and more fiddly than any of the spiny ring-snaffler's past outings.

It'd be a shame to see Sonic bite the dust, Zeitgeist-wise, but if he continues to make ill-advised career choices such as this (the gaming

artist of the 2000AD school - had a hand in the development of the game, and while it's true that the characters themselves wouldn't look out of place in Tharg's wondermag, there's no getting away from the fact that they're also far too blocky for their own good.

There's plenty to play through, and the cliched shenanigans therein should keep hardcore sci-fi spods entertained for a fair while - but here at *PC Zone* we're a jaded bunch who've seen far better. Besides, we frown upon any game which features one or more alien species with an errant apostrophe in the middle of its name. *Perfect Assassin* not only brings us the K'lhanna and the Pra'min, but also a character called T'Promiel, which is far too suggestive of the band T'Pau (remember them?) to be truly comfortable. All things considered, this game is better suited to the adventure-starved PlayStation, on which it also appears.

Charlie Brooker

Publisher: Grolier Interactive
Tel: 01865 264800
Price: £TBC

68

SONIC 3D PC: FLICKIES ISLAND

Celebrity is a fickle phenomenon. One moment you're 'it', the next you're 'shit' - with scarcely a pause for breath in between the two extremes. The fame of children's celebrities tends to be even more short-lived; countless showbiz careers have been unexpectedly curtailed by nothing more complex than the whims of a mewling



The ridiculously titled *Disney's Action Game Featuring Disney's Hercules*.

equivalent of a starring role in *Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot*, it won't be long until he's just another piece of roadkill on the information superhighway.

Charlie Brooker

Publisher: Sega
Web site: www.sega.com
Price: £29.99

57

DISNEY'S ACTION GAME FEATURING DISNEY'S HERCULES

Okay, now you've digested that title, you'll no doubt be none too surprised to hear that *Hercules* (for short) is a platform game starring numerous characters (and voices) Disney's 'smash-hit' animation spectacular.

It's obviously aimed at kids, so it would be unfair to compare it to anything other than games of a

similar ilk. Suffice to say that it looks nice enough (although it does chug in high-res unless played in a microscopic window), contains all the elements you'd expect to see in a Disney platform adventure (except, perhaps, big blue bears singing daft little songs to little boys), and incorporates new pseudo 3D bits that enable you to move Hercules in and out of the action, along with *Crash Bandicoot*-style running into the screen segments.

It's not clever, but then it was never meant to be. At £39.99 it's a little over-priced, but if it keeps the little 'uns quiet for a couple of hours then who dare put a price on silence?

Jeremy Wells

Publisher: Disney Interactive
Contact: 0181 222 1571
Price: £39.99

70

PC Zone pants



CORPORATE WARRIOR

This has to be the most pointless 'game' ever devised. *Corporate Warrior* is a curious mix of *Doom* and an Economics lecture - only it's worse than both. (Believe me, I know). It's being hailed as 'the only action-packed 3D business strategy



game! Well, thank the Lord for that.

Some bright spark must have realised they were fighting a losing battle, trying to stop their employees playing *Doom* over the office network, and decided to join them rather than beat them. Perhaps even make a bit of money on the side. As an action game you would be better off served by *Doom*, and for a business strategy game you should look at something like *Theme Park*. But, of course, this is aimed at corporate type business users and could well be the biggest thing since WordPerfect 5.1.

If any company software buyers are reading this review, get *Quake*. It's better for morale and your colleagues will love you forever. This miserable piece of corporate drivel was developed by your competitors and they want you out of business.

Richie Shoemaker

Publisher: Zablac
Tel: 01626 332233
Price: £29.99

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THE GREATEST



2000



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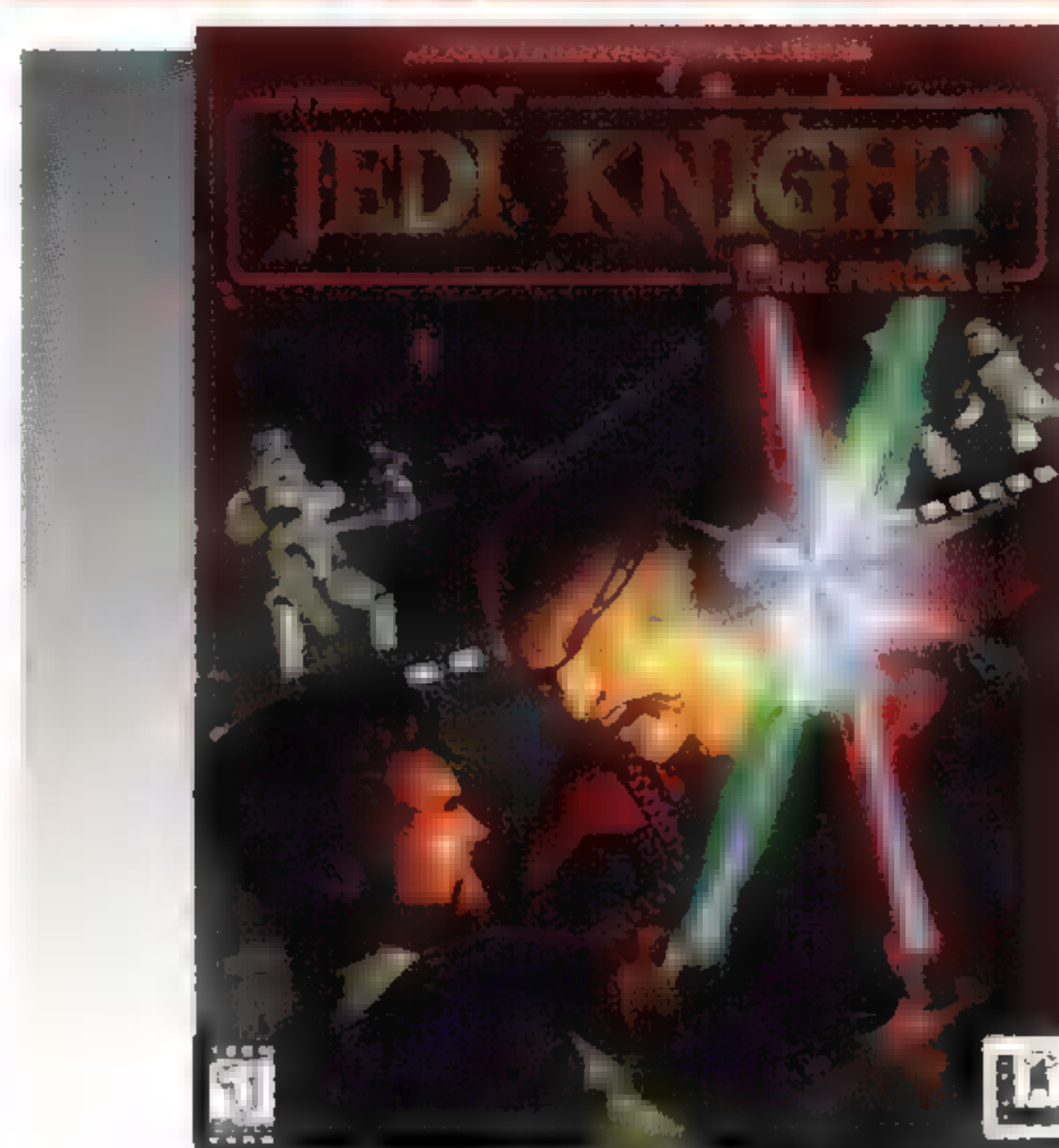
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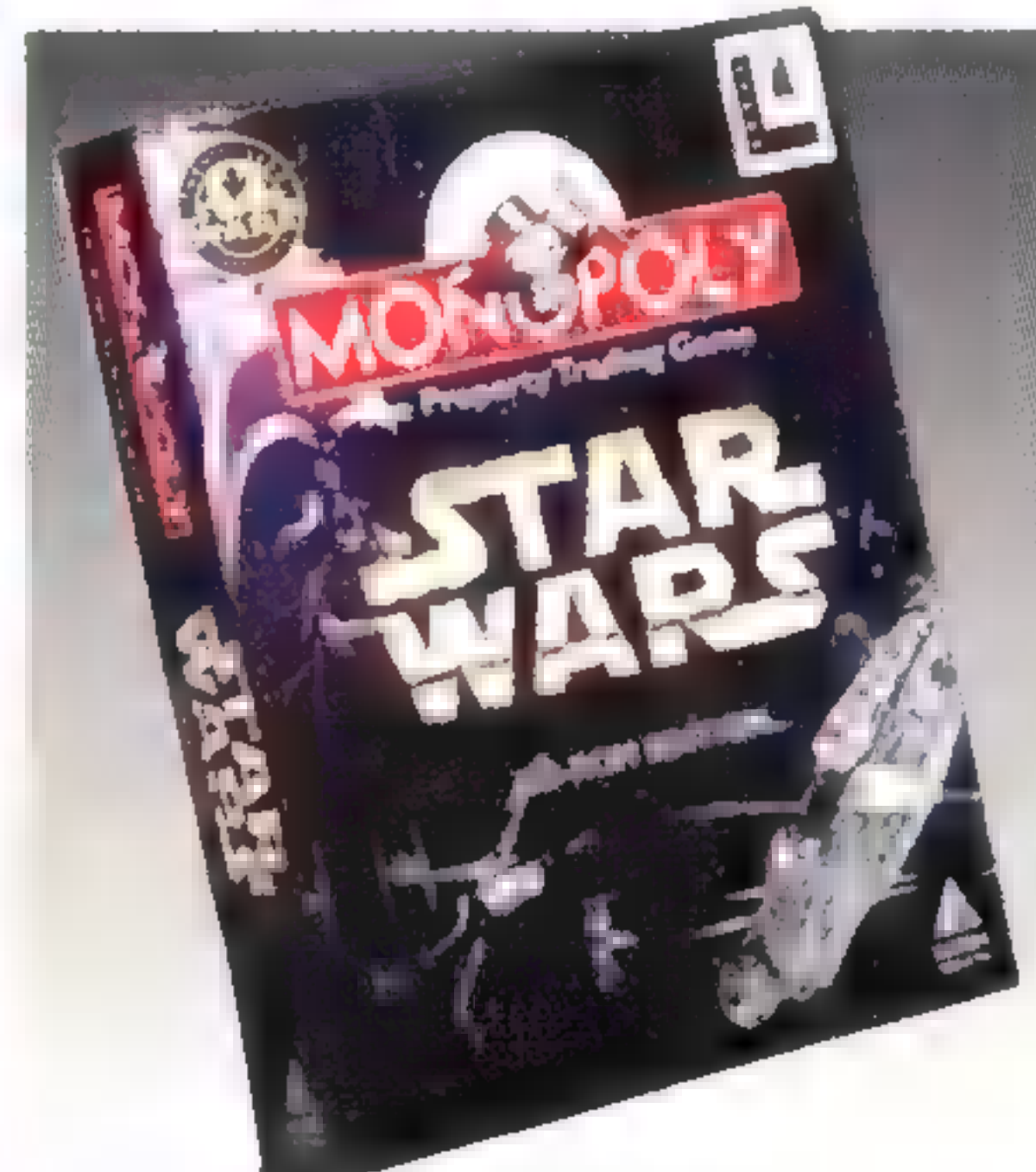
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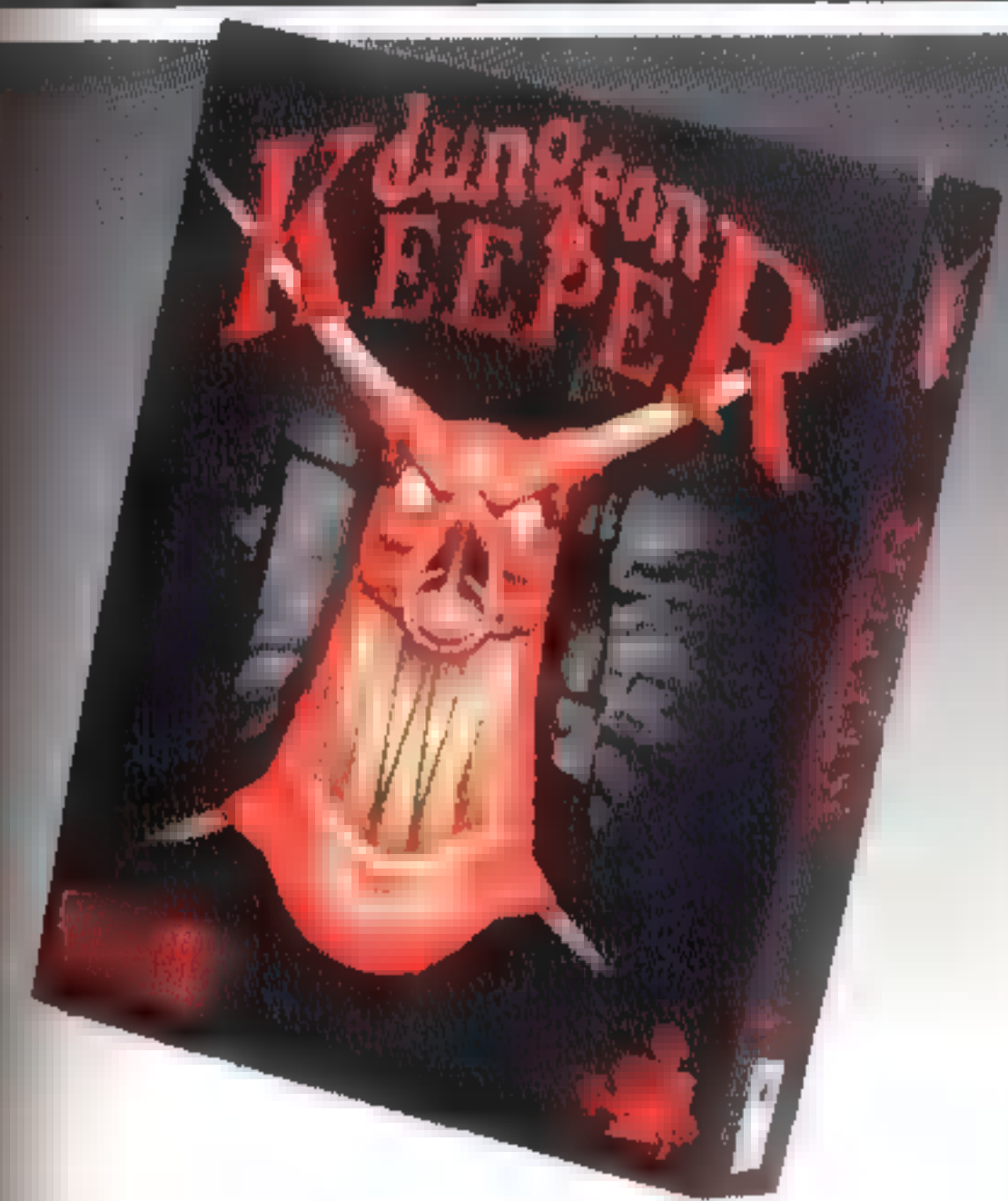
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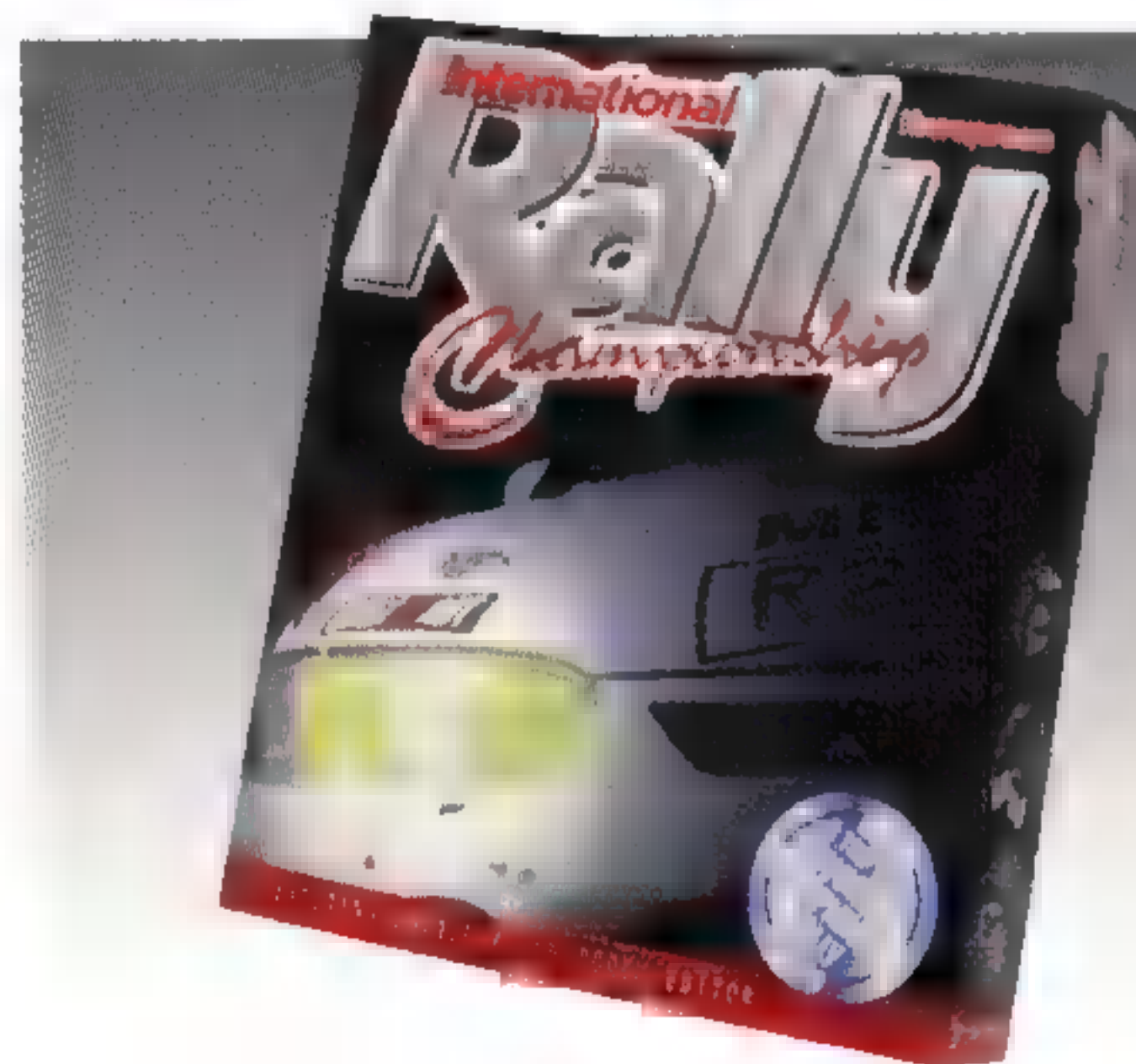


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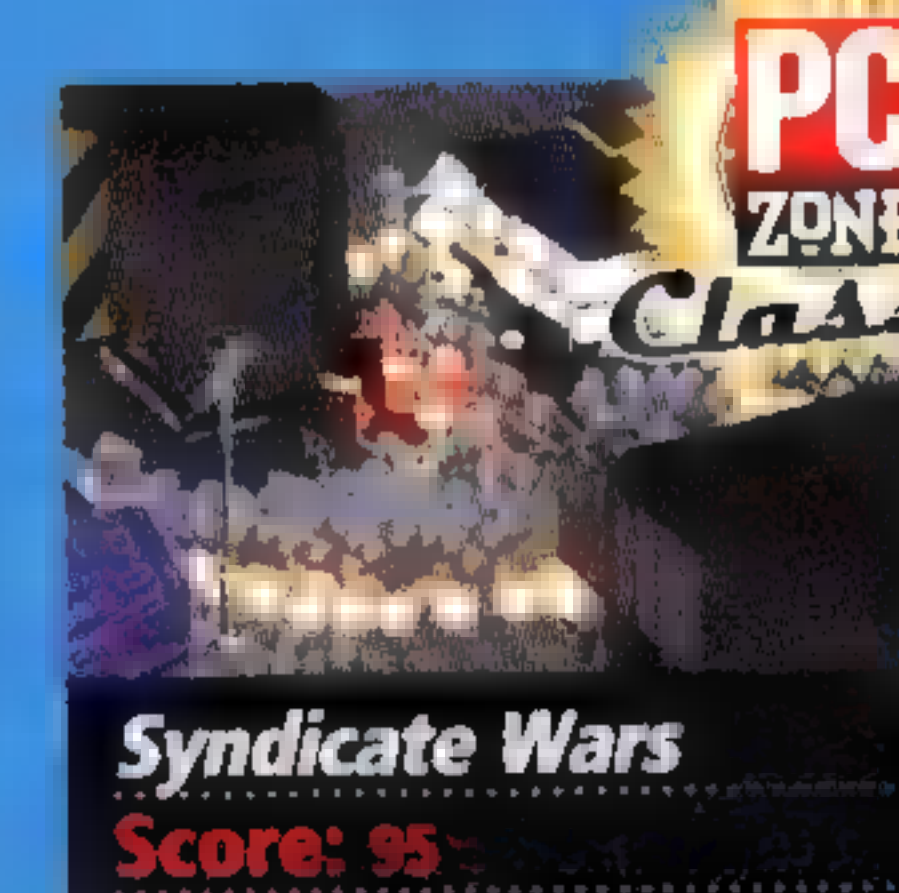
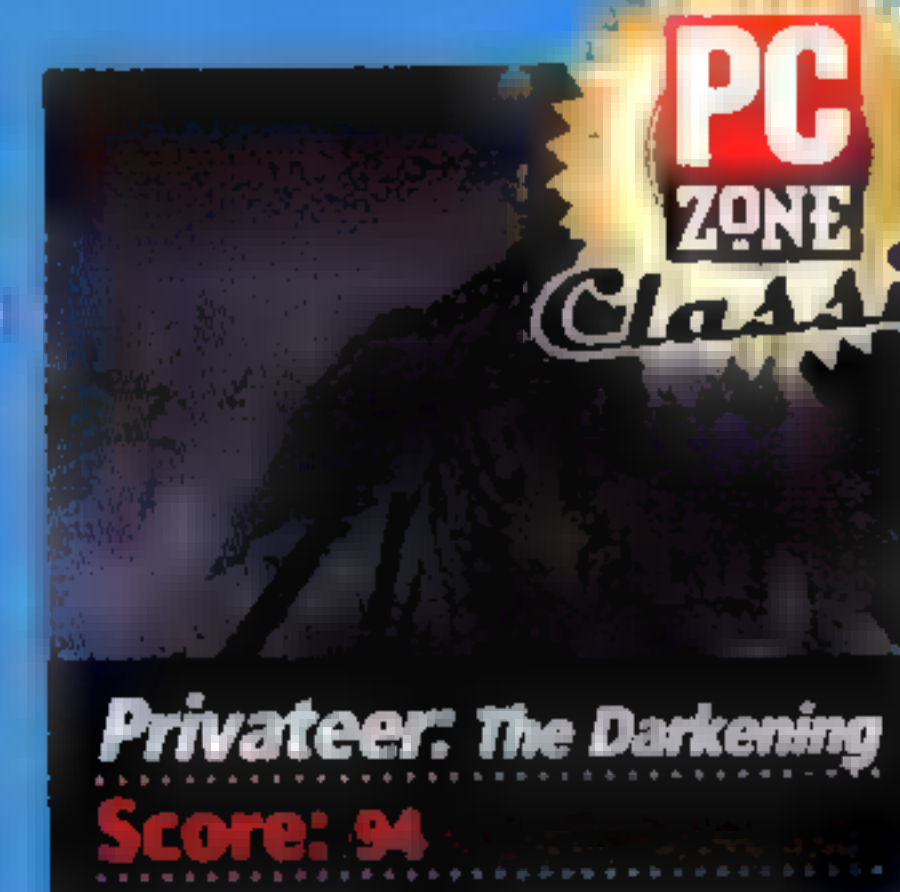
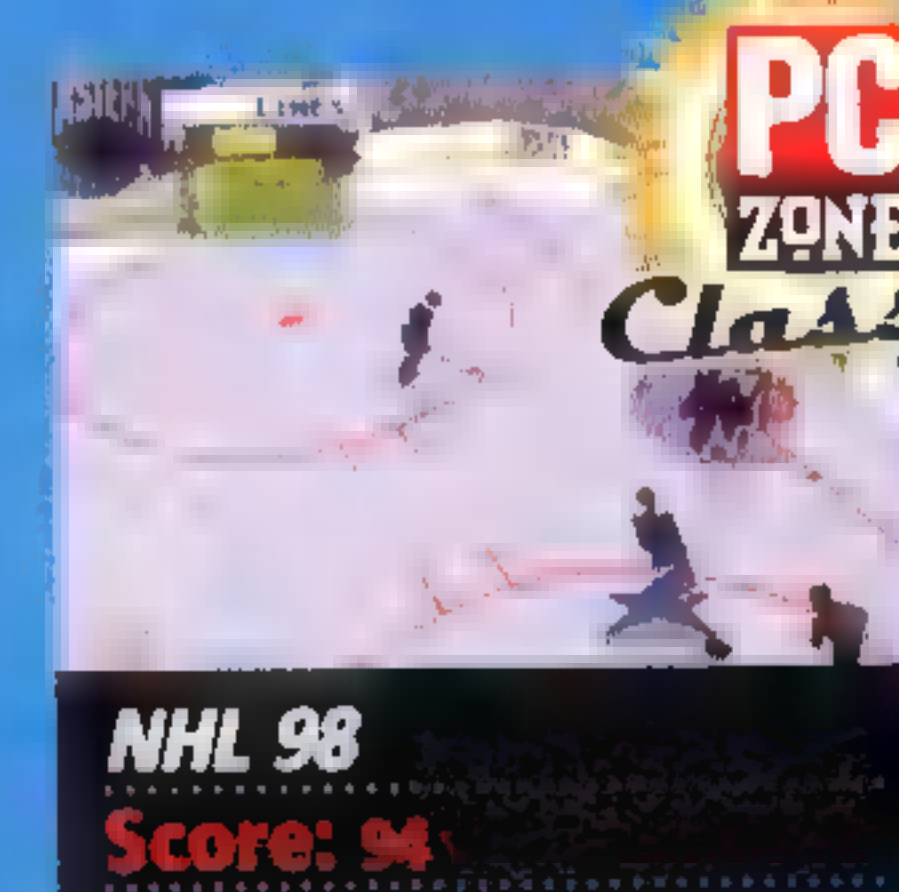
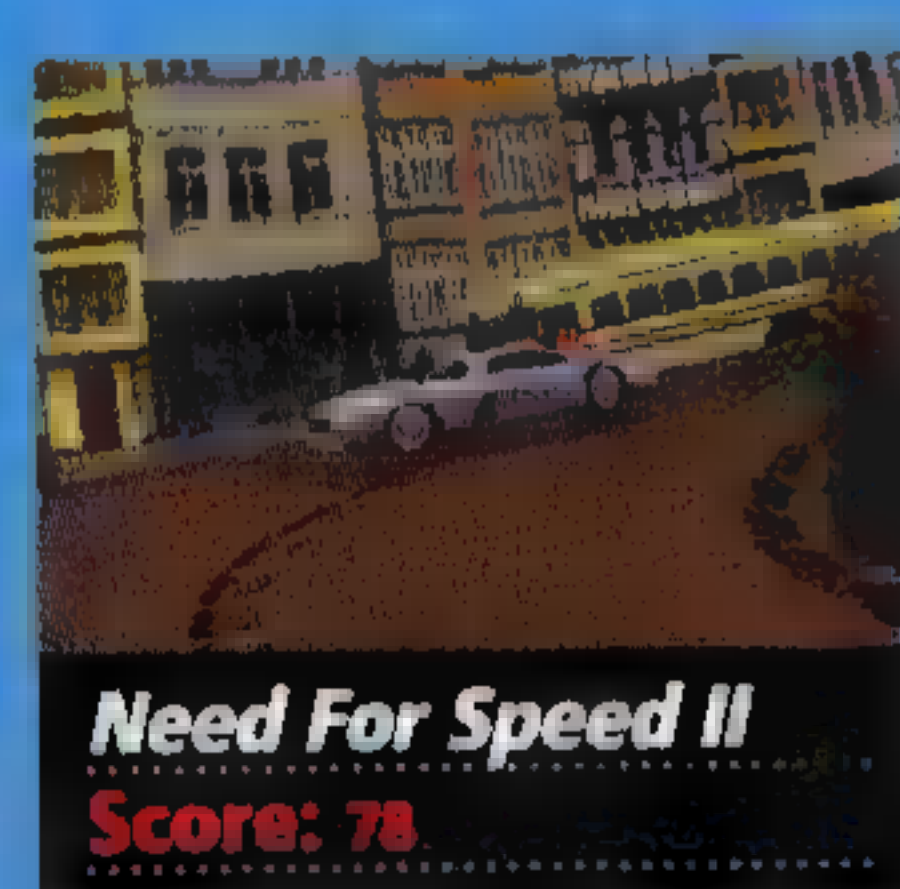
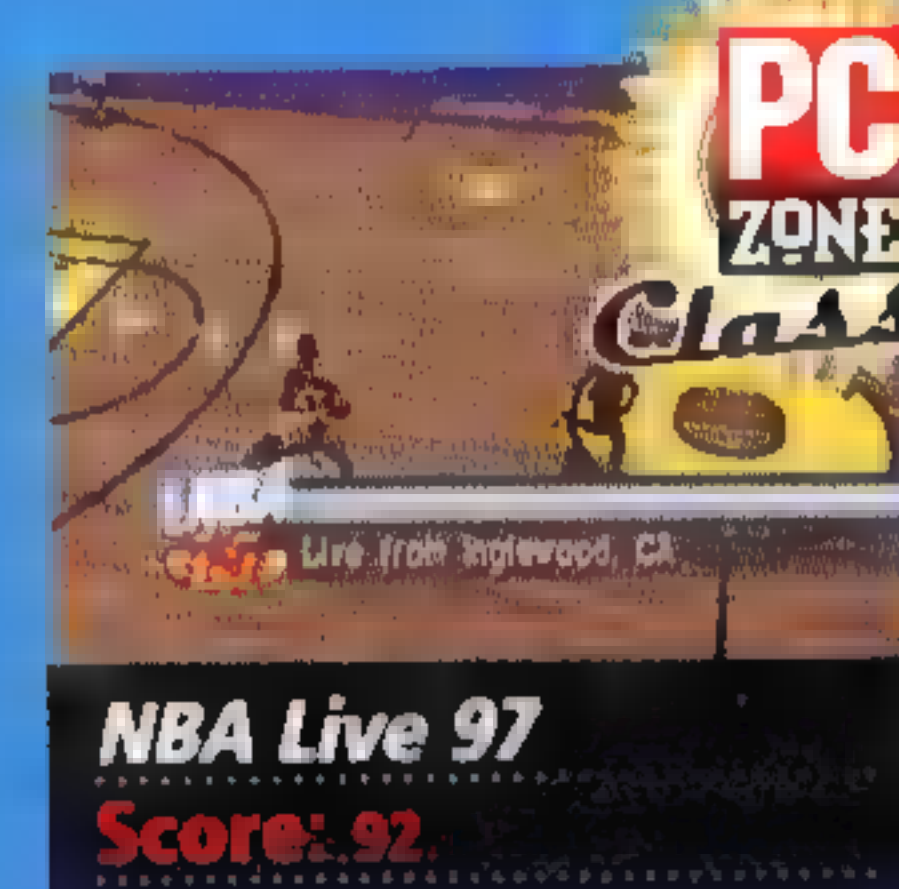
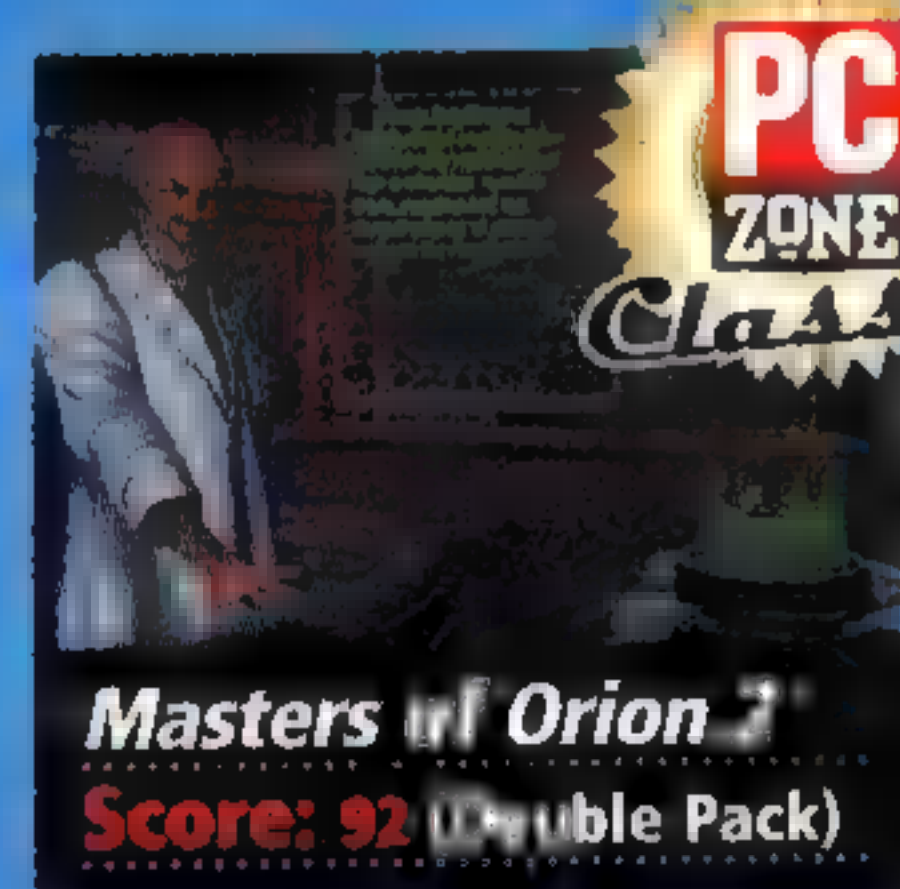
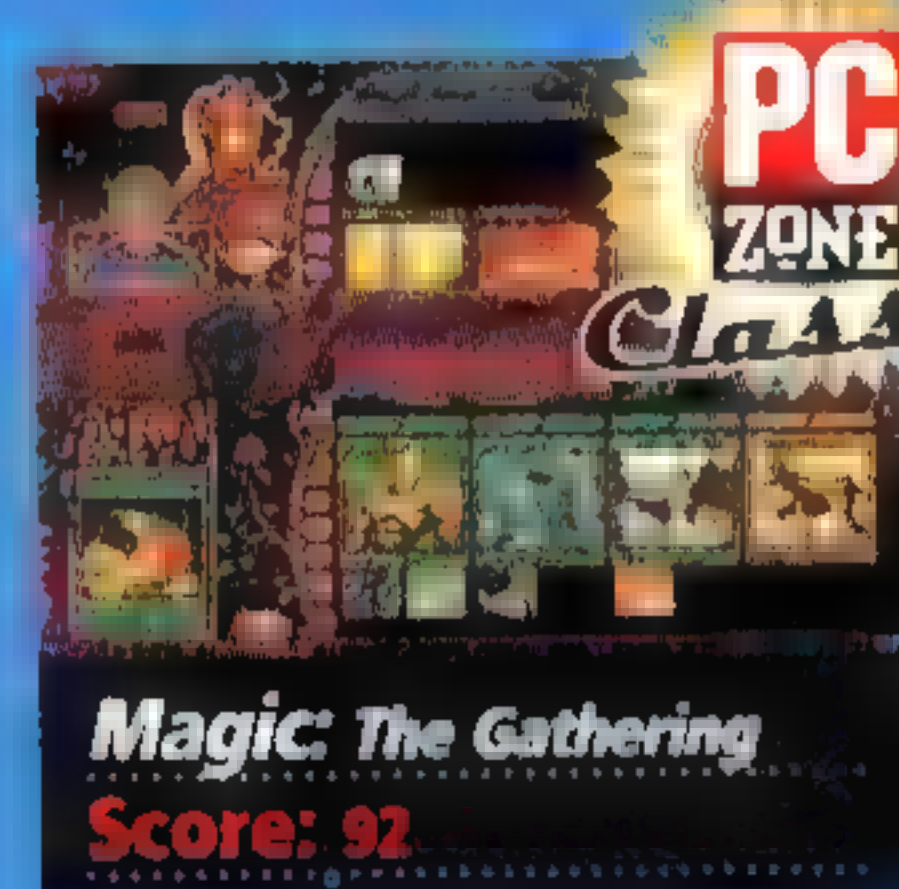
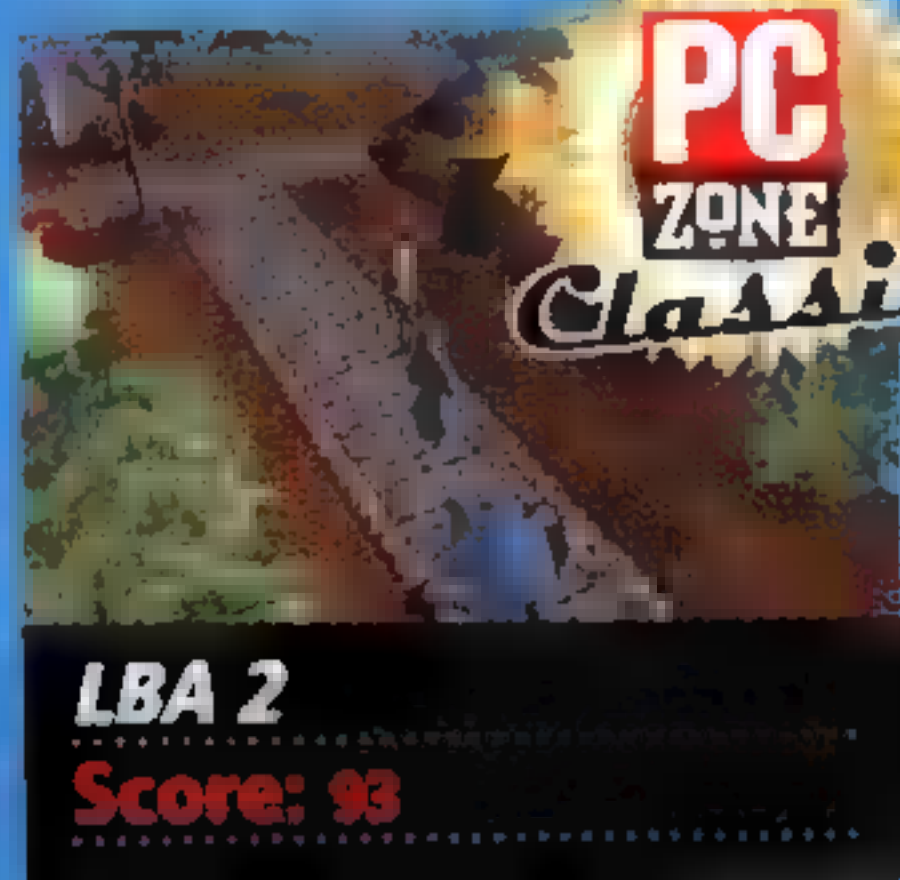
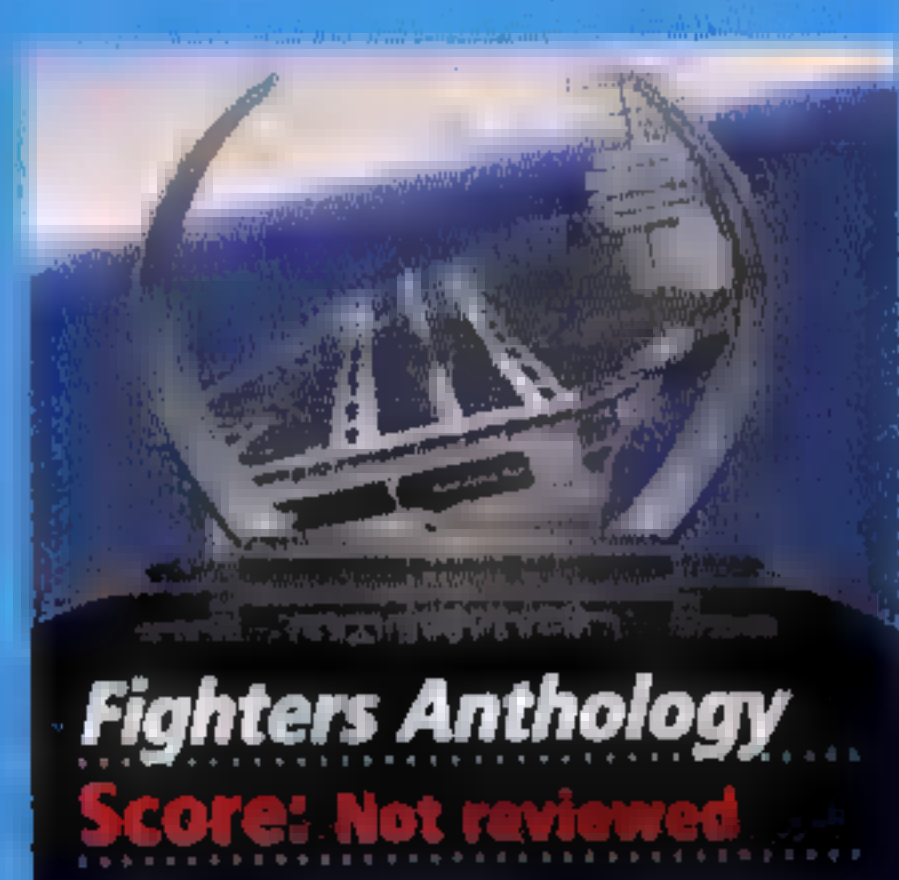
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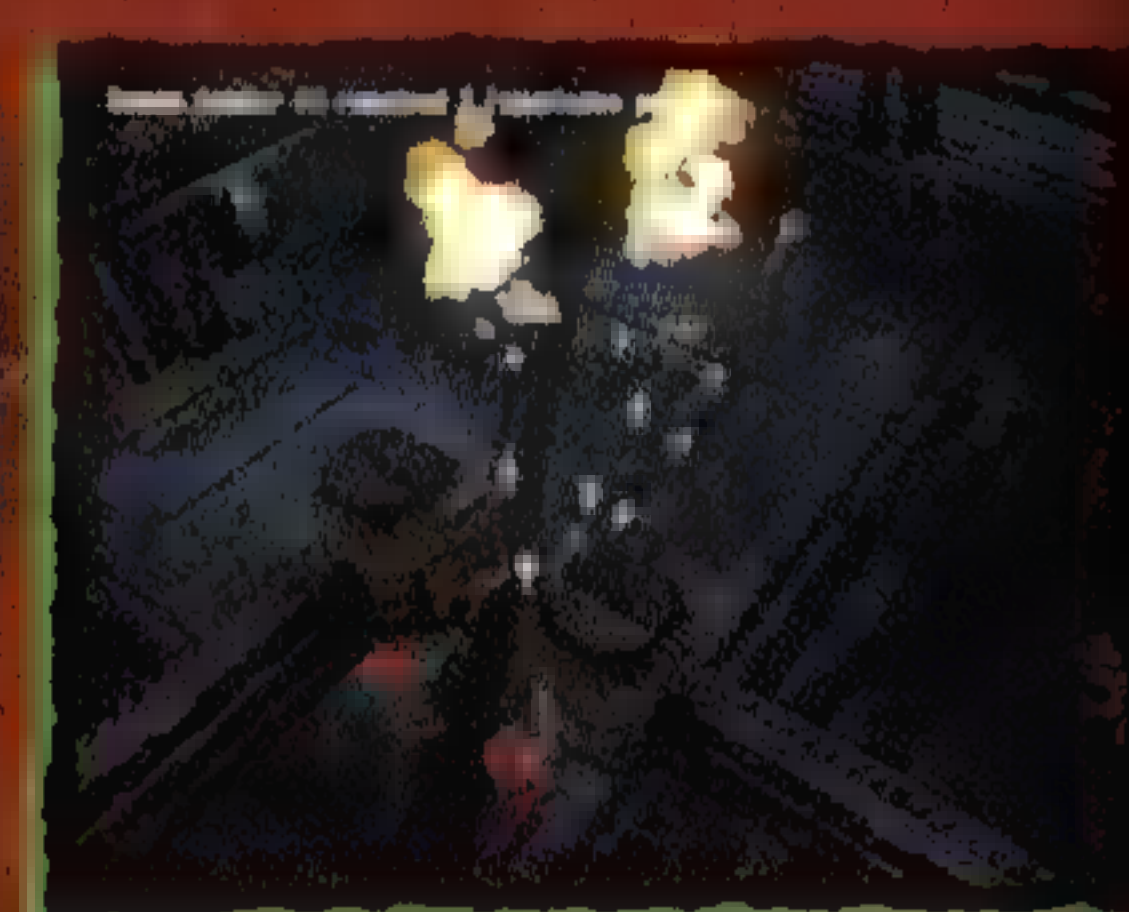
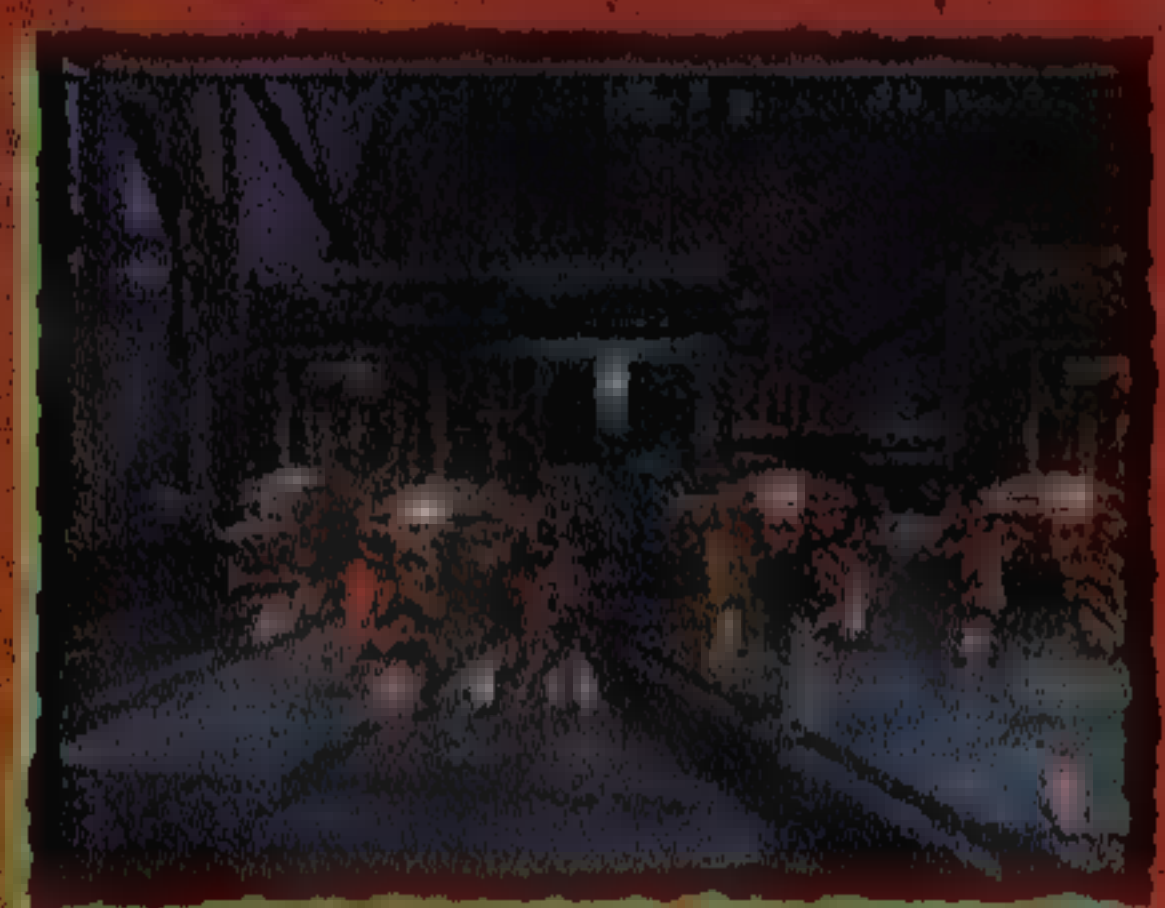
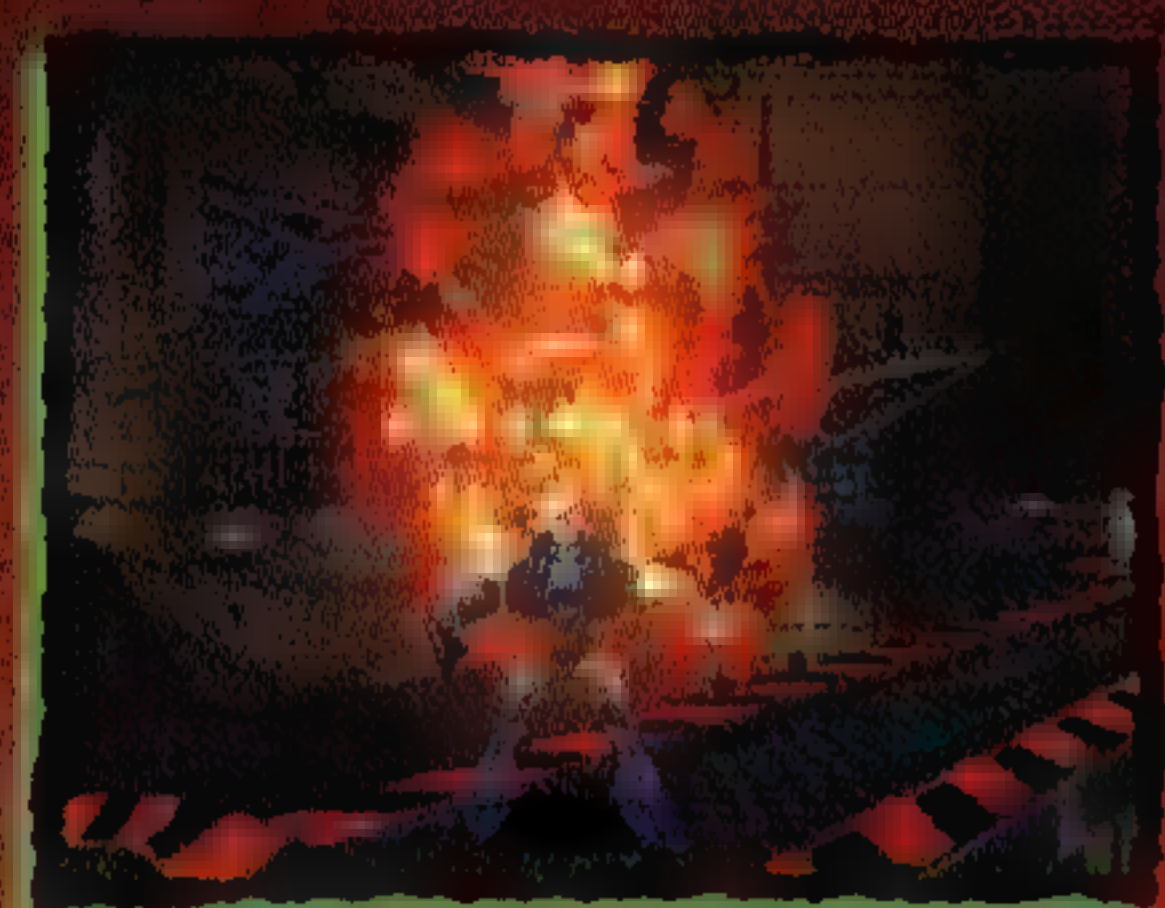
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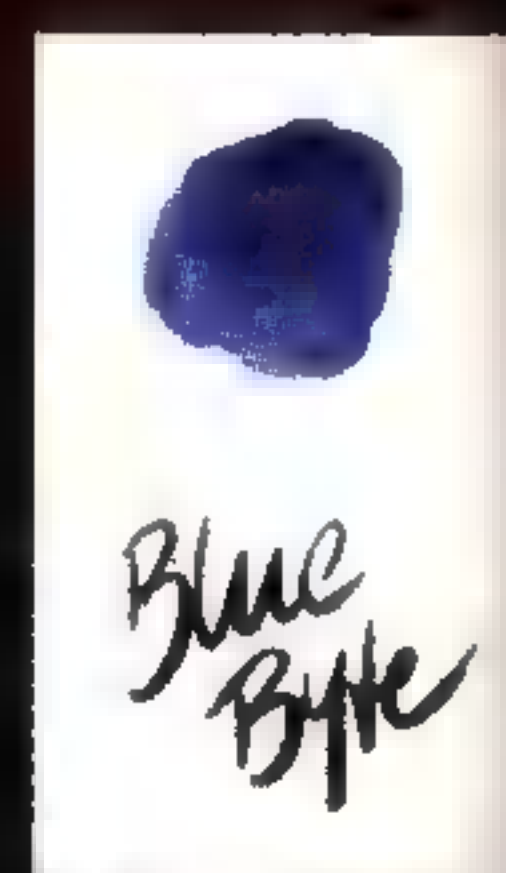
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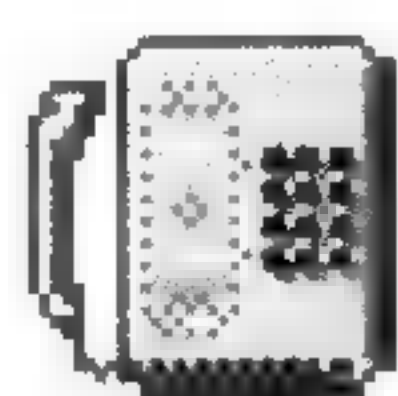
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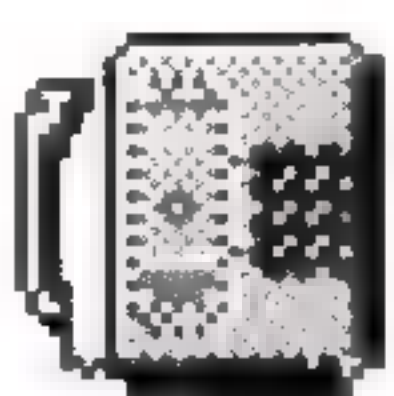
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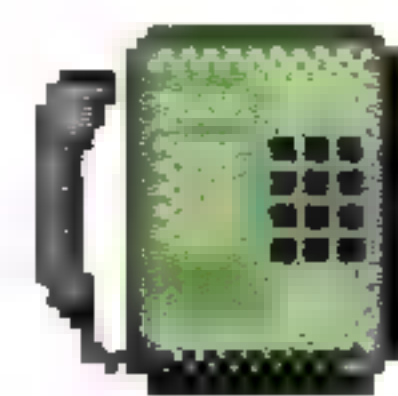
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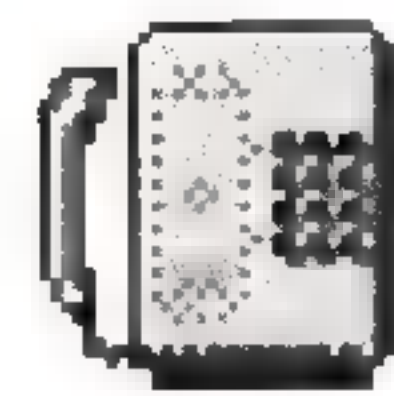
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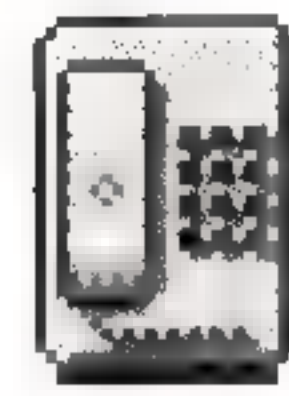
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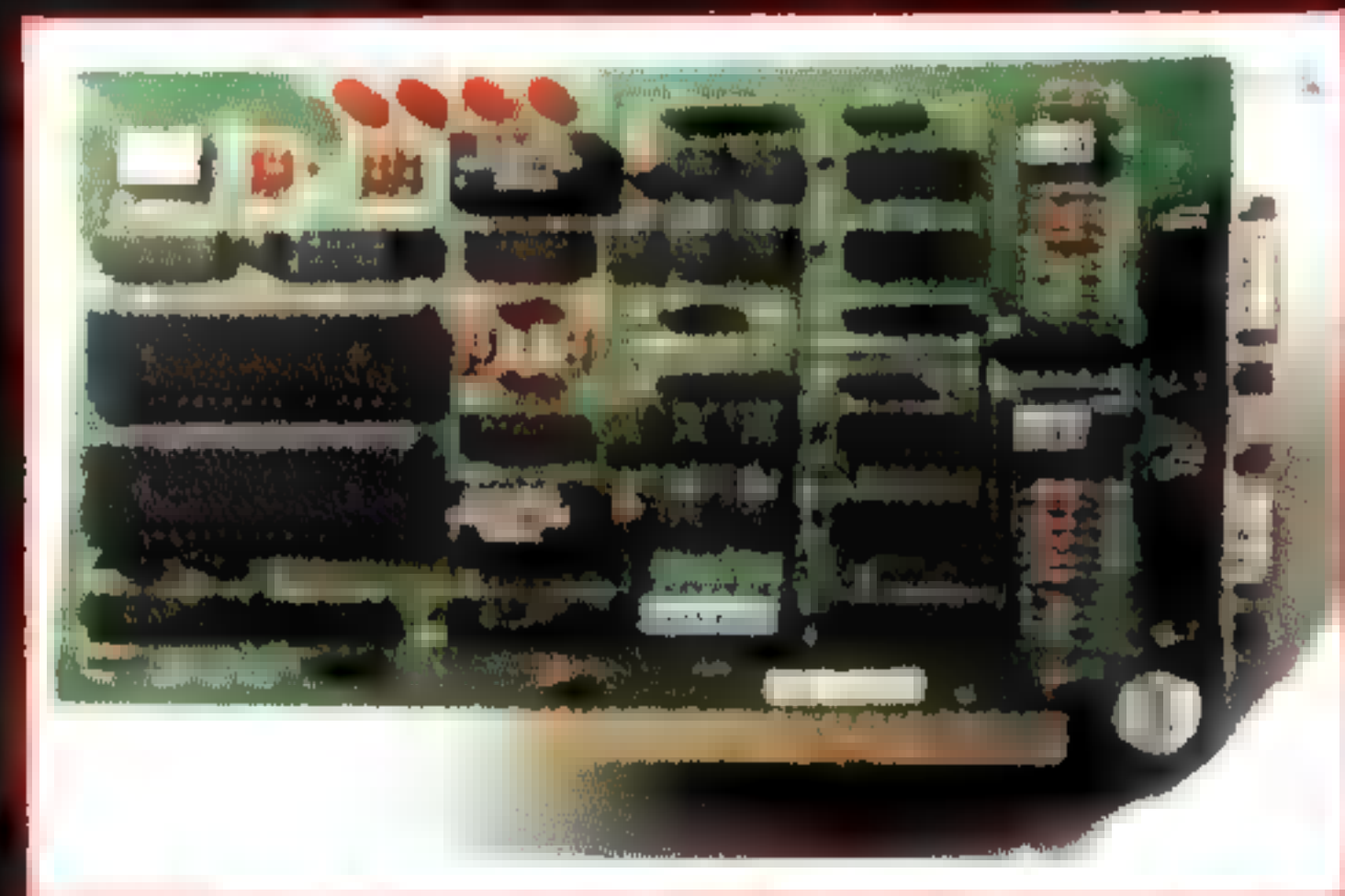
LAN of the living

"But network gaming is only for those people who use PCs and have a big network at work, surely?" Not any more, we say.

WE'RE PRETTY LUCKY HERE AT PC ZONE, HAVING top-of-the-range PCs and a super-fast network to play games over. Massive bloody *Quake* sessions (particularly those inside the startlingly entertaining *Pain Keep* add-on which recently found its way onto almost every machine in the office some weeks ago) are not uncommon. Because of this we do tend to come in for a bit of flack from people who still maintain that network gaming is purely the domain of the gaming elite (ie us).

Well, let me tell you this: it isn't. Setting up a basic network at home isn't as expensive, or as complicated as many people like to think. I have a couple of friends that have two or three PCs networked at home, and we regularly indulge in (wait for it...) multiplayer sailor, I mean, erm, gaming sessions in the comfort of our own homes. *Quake* (obviously), *Hexen 2* (recently) and *Twilight Lands* (joking) all feature. Quite a few of our readers have a similar set-up too, so this phenomenon is becoming more widespread as the technology becomes more accessible and less expensive. Imagine how these guys must feel when they get their mates round to show them the latest in PC gaming.

Our network feature this month should hopefully go some way to dispelling any networking fears you may have had. We've tried our best not to be overly techie, but you will encounter snippets of jargon here and there, and the odd acronym. Don't let that put you off though. If you have the resources and the inclination to network yourself up - give it a go. We're telling you, it really is worth it.

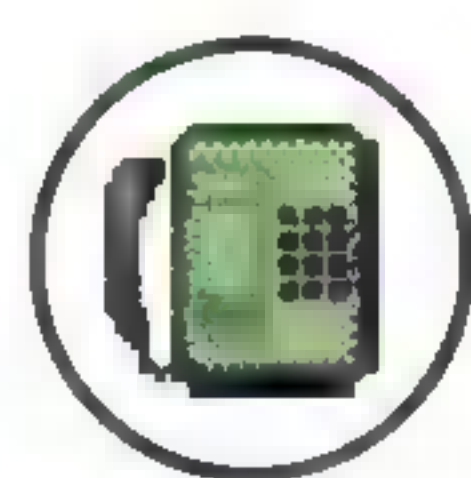


Here's a look at a network card. Using one could help you...

Paul Mallinson

Networking at home

Two player networking is easy enough - just join two PCs with a serial cable and you're laughing. Some of us have been doing this for years. But if your mate came round on a Saturday afternoon with his brand new MMX ninja machine demanding a multiplayer death duel, what you gonna do? You'd better start looking at a proper network, with NICs and protocols and stuff. **Miles Tudor** offers a few handy hints for setting up your own network at home.



There are several steps to setting up a small LAN for gaming, all of which are easy enough if you have some computer knowledge.

We're concentrating on a set-up for Windows 95 here, although DOS-based games running under Windows 95 should still work okay.

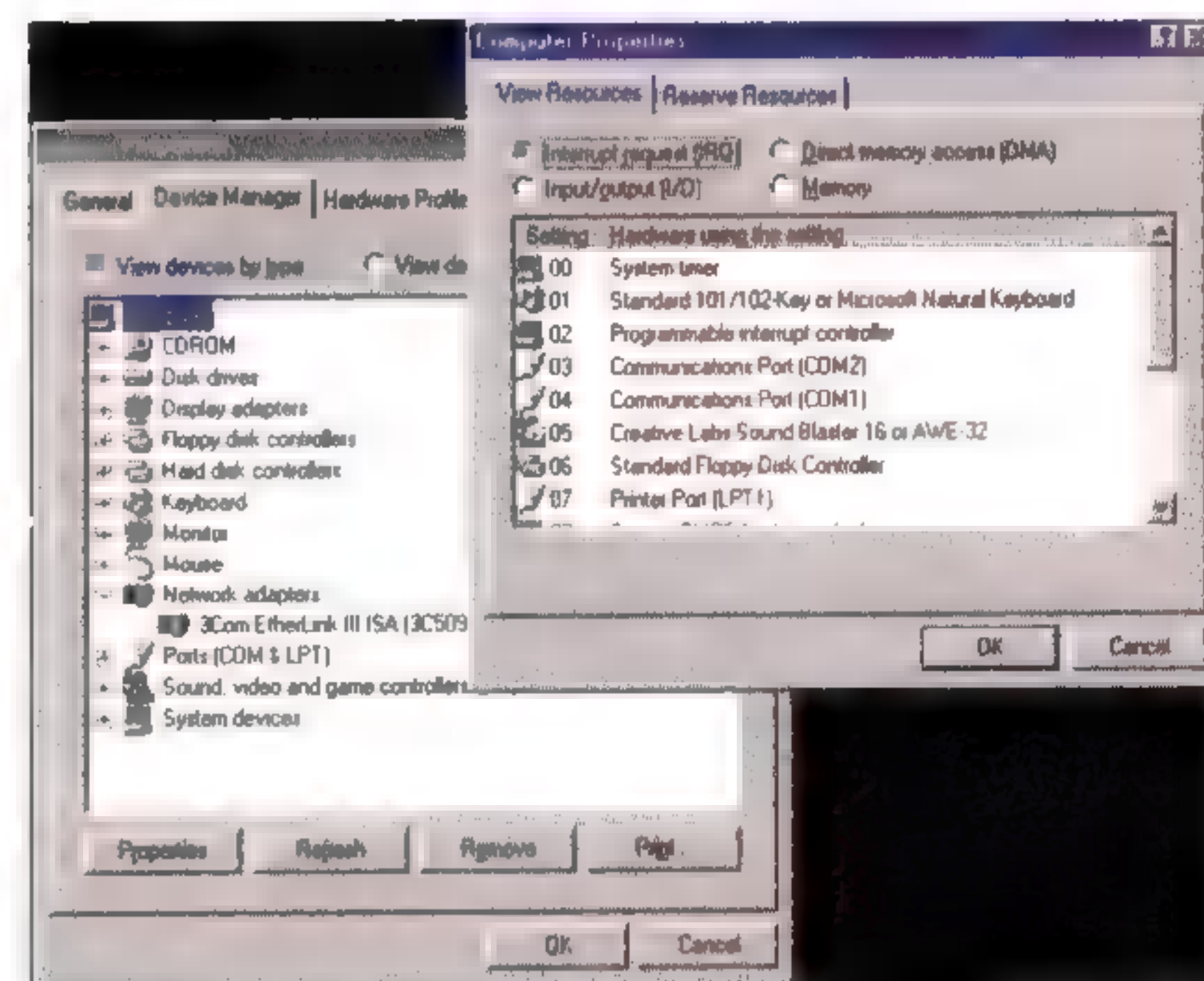
Setting up a network at home isn't that difficult, but we'll highlight some of the most common sticking points. As always: if in doubt, ask a professional.

To start off with, you'll need a NIC for each computer that you're connecting to the network, plus a cable to connect and a T-piece if you're using coaxial cable. NICs cost about 20 quid and upwards (for a basic ISA bus fitting, more for a PCI type), but try and get one that has both BNC coaxial and RJ45 connectors for more flexibility. Then check what resources (IRQs and I/O addresses) are free on your machine. To do this click on Control Panel, System, Device Manager, Computer and Properties.

Messing with jumpers

If the network card has jumpers, set them to the resources that you know are unused by your PC (it may not have any if it's PnP, so check the manual you got with your card if unsure).

Power the machine down, whip off the case



Check your system's free resources by using Properties in the Device Manager.

WARNING!

Messing around inside your machine can be more than just a little hazardous if you don't know what you're doing. So, consult your PC supplier or a friend in 'the know' if unsure (then you can blame it on them if it all goes wrong). PC Zone cannot accept responsibility for any disasters you may bring on yourself.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

1 Network card – approx £20 per PC.

1 length of Coax cable with BNC connectors and a T-piece (for a 10base-2 network) – cost: £3 in total.

OR

1 length of thin Ethernet cable with RJ45 connectors (for a 10base-T network) – will cost about £3 in total.

2 BNC Terminators (for a 10base-2 network) which'll cost about £2 for both

OR

A Hub – (5 port mini Hub, about £45)

and stick your NIC into any free slot on your motherboard. Put the case back on, connect the machine to another using a T-piece and Coax, or to the Hub if you're using one, and start up. If your PC is fairly new and supports PnP you might be pleasantly surprised to find that it auto-detects and configures itself when you go back to Windows 95.

The hard bit

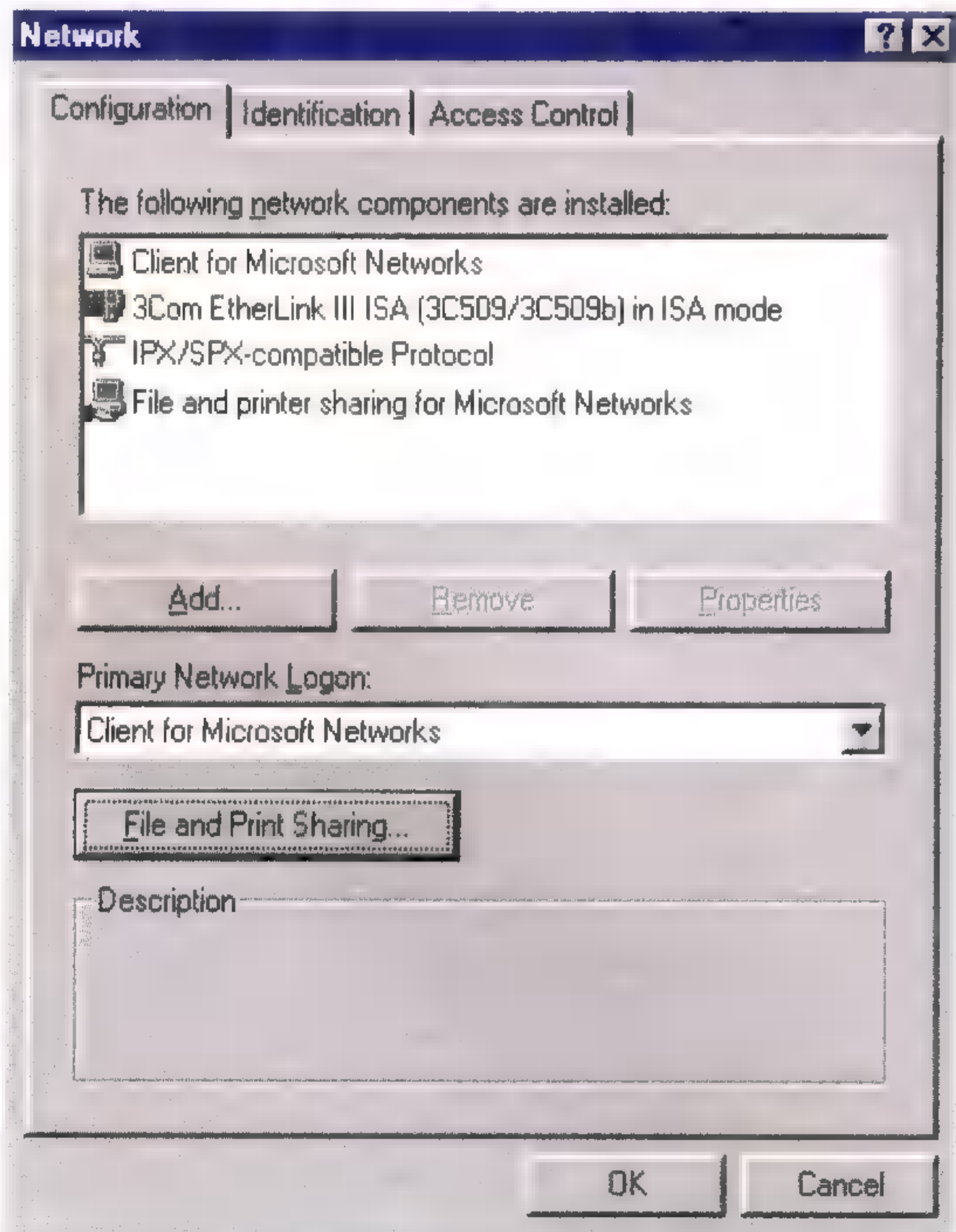
If it doesn't auto-detect, go to the Control Panel, then Add New Hardware. Say 'No' when asked to search for new hardware, then choose Network Adaptors and click on 'Have Disk' in the next window. You should then be prompted for a floppy disk so use the floppy that came with the NIC (you've still got it haven't you?) or select your card from the given selection.

After you restart and the NIC is detected, Windows 95 should begin Microsoft Networking set-up.

Three main things

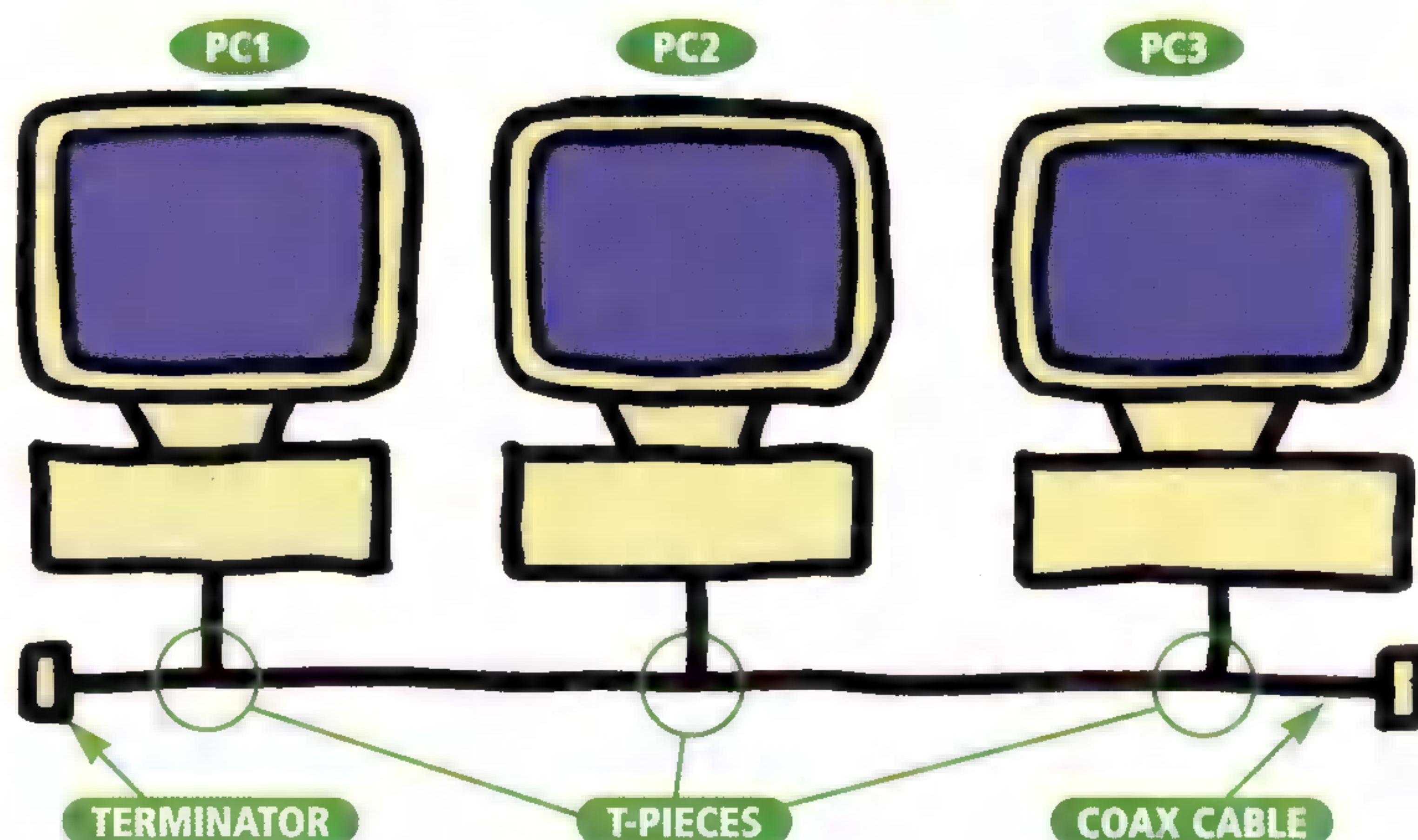
There are three main things that are needed for network gaming: The Microsoft networking client, the network adaptor, and the IPX/SPX protocol.

If you want to exchange files in Windows 95 you also need File and Printer sharing enabled. In the Identification tab make sure your computer has a unique name, but all should share the same Workgroup name. There may be other bits installed already, such as TCP/IP (if you have an Internet connection for



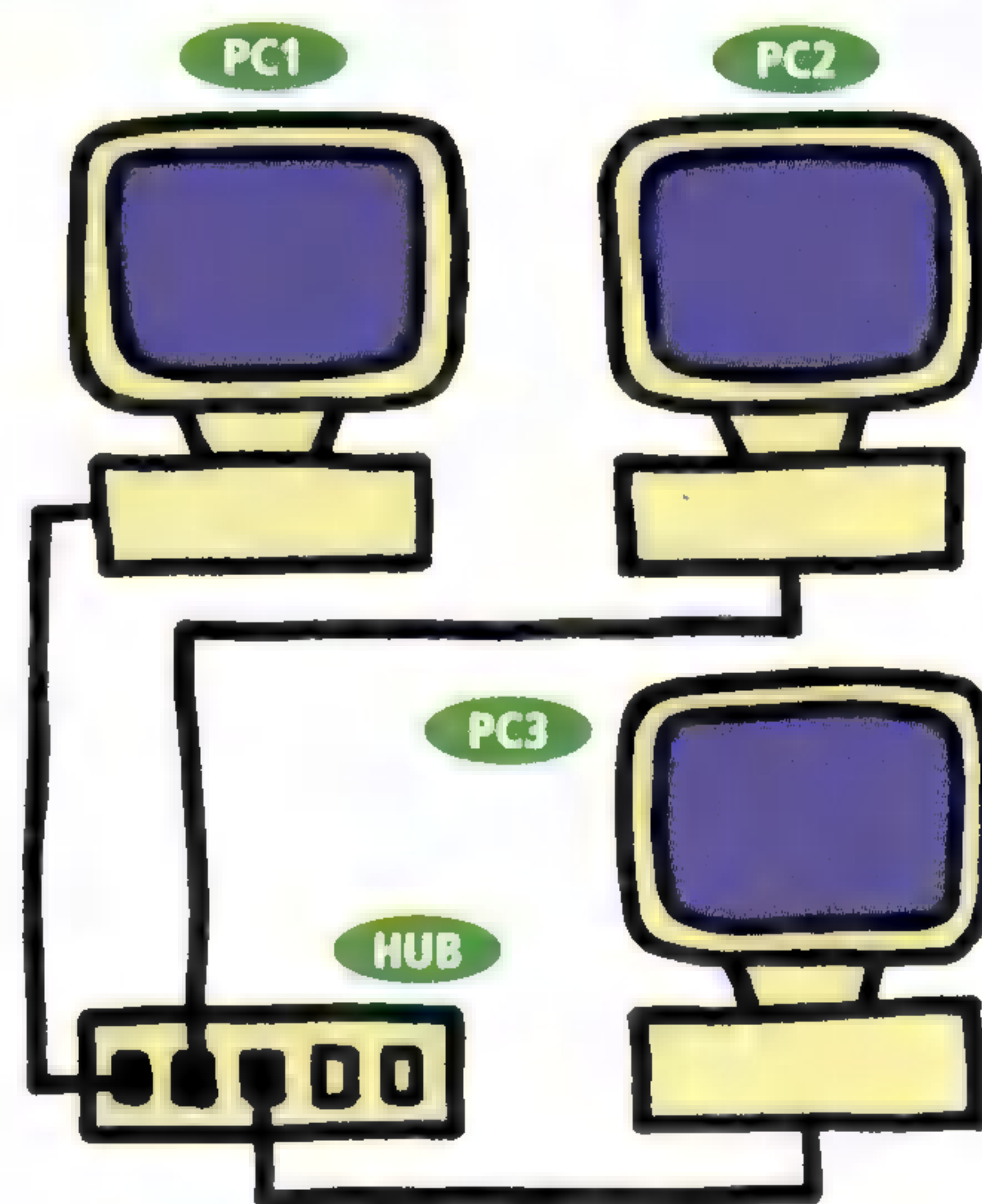
Your Network Properties should look something like this.

10 BASE-2 NETWORK



(Top) Putting together a network without a Hub? This is how you do it. (Right) With a Hub. Obviously!

10 BASE-T NETWORK



GLOSSARY

NIC: Network Interface Card. A network card that fits in one of your PC expansion slots.

PnP: Plug and Play. A standard that allows automatic detection and configuration of hardware added to your PC.

IPX: Inter-network Packet Exchange. The most commonly used protocol for computer gaming.

TCP/IP: Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol. The protocol used for Internet communication.

10base-2, COAX, BNC: Thin Ethernet. Like the cable TV aerials use.

10base-T, RJ45: Fast Ethernet. Looks a bit like telephone cable and connectors.

Hub: central connecting point in a 10base-T network.

LAN: Local Area Network. The sort of thing we're trying to tell you about here.

example) – just leave these well alone. Try using the Networking Troubleshooter in Windows 95 if you have problems at this stage.

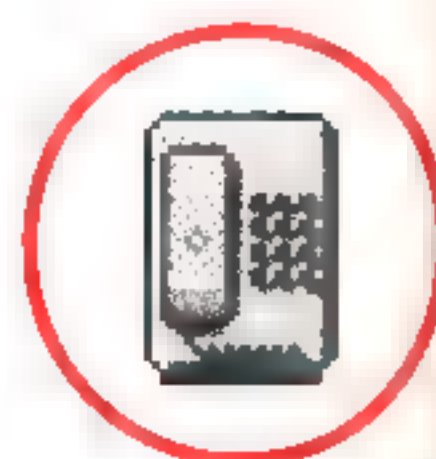
If things still don't appear to be working (and you've been through Networking Troubleshooter) the most likely problem is a resource conflict in your machine. If that is the case then here's a tip: check the floppy that came with the network card. There will probably be an easy-to-use DOS-based configuration/diagnosis program which you can use to check/set the resources of the NIC.

If you're still having problems at this point: call in the professionals.

Does it work?

At the end of all this you should then be able to see all the other PCs in the Network Neighbourhood. You should also be able to exchange files that have been put on share (right click any folder and select 'Sharing' to enable/disable this feature).

If all looks well at this point, drag out that copy of *Quake* and get blasting. Spoooge-a-rama.



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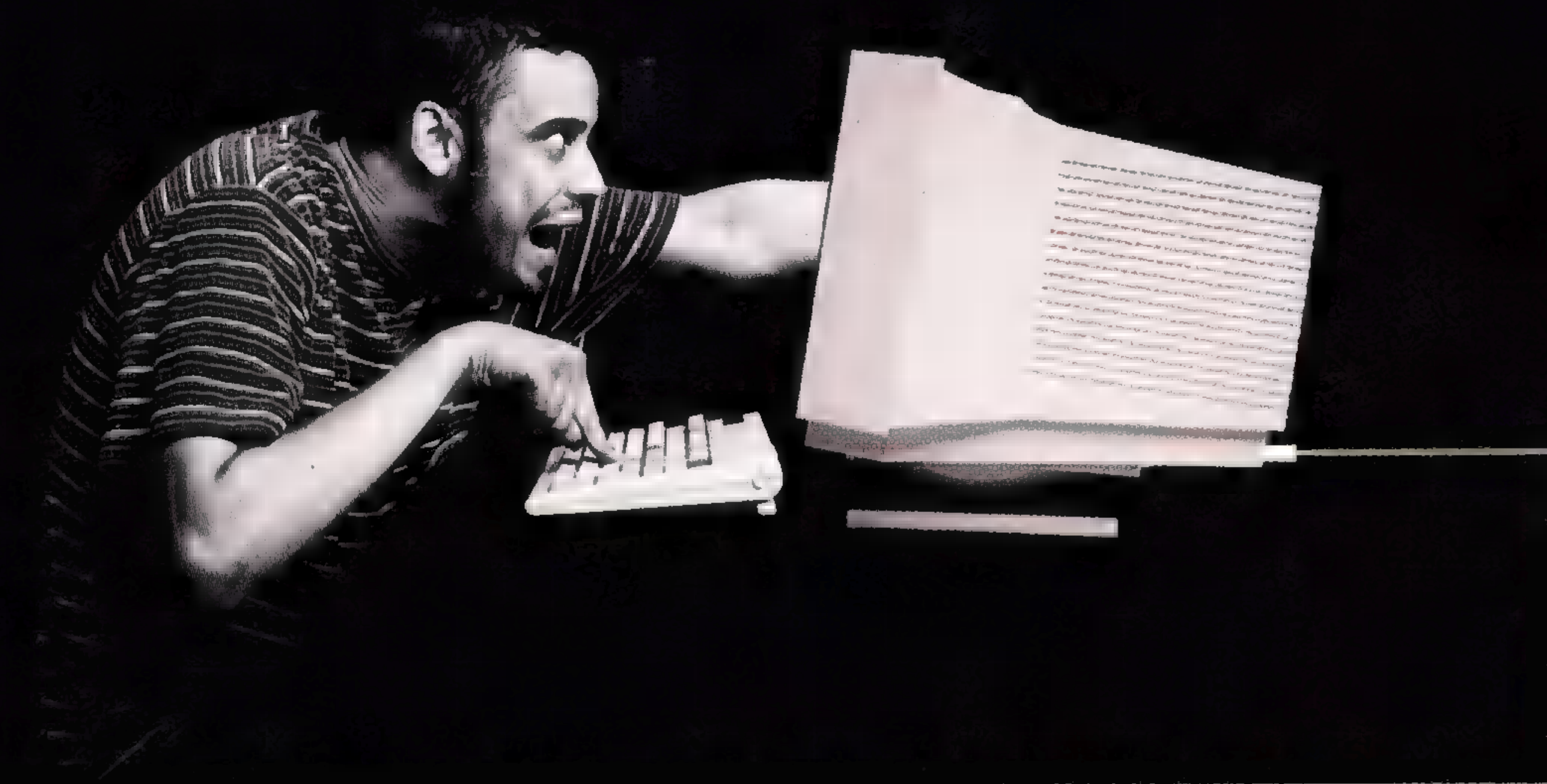
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CARMAGEDDON

THE GAME THEY TRIED TO BAN



**RICHIE SHOEMAKER
COMES OVER ALL
FAINT AT THE SIGHT
OF BLOOD, SO WE
BLINDFOLDED HIM,
TWIRLED HIM AROUND AND
AROUND AND PUSHED HIM IN A
SOUTHERLY DIRECTION.**

DOES ANYONE REMEMBER QUARANTINE? YOU played the role of a taxi driver on the edge, who picked up fares and took them wherever they wanted to go. Your clients were often shady characters or suspect packages, but this is not what made the game interesting. In the 'Neo York' of the future, running over pedestrians and seeing pixelated gore all over the hood of your yellow hearse cab was part of the fun. Quarantine wasn't banned. It should have been, not because it was sick and disgusting but, compared to the blood-soaked wonder of Carmageddon, it was crap.

So it fell to Carmageddon to be the first computer game to be banned in the UK. We loved it, we still do. The censored version that hit the shops had all the blood taken out and green gook put in its place. The screams had been switched for moans and the only way to enjoy the full on 1 level experience is with the unofficial gore patch that we've consistently been sneaking on to our cover disc. The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) probably isn't very chuffed with the deal, but as they continue to live in the past first flares continue to look more and more ridiculous. The Internet has most definitely moved the censorship goal posts.

Going down to The Isle of Wight, I went down to seek the truth and down a couple of beers with Patrick Huckland and Neil Barnden, head honchos of Stainless Software. My mission: to talk about blood and bloody censorship.

PCZ: What are your feelings on the zombie (UK) version of Carmageddon and the way things have turned out?

Patrick: It's turned out better than it could've done. The gameplay is no different but it's lost the black humour. From the censorship point of view, it infuriates me - it certainly infuriates me. I can't believe they considered the censored version on the box, that sums up the whole thing.

Neil: In terms of the actual zombie version, when we finished the zombies and chuckin' them in and started driving around, we found that it was still fun, particularly once the sounds that



run, our resident nutcase, put in there. To make the buses for the zombies and they're all very good. It was different, but we were relieved it wasn't banned.

Patrick: In the zombie version you even see an action replay which makes a whole room burst out laughing and cheering - not at the same way at any rate.

Neil: Other than the zombies, it's turned out better than we could've hoped. We are very lucky with the team we've got together.

PCZ: What about the way Carmageddon was marketed. Wasn't it all one huge publicity stunt?

Neil: There was an element of short-sightedness in terms of dealing with potential problems earlier on.

Patrick: We were all saying at the time: "It's not going to get banned because no-one had ever been banned." We knew the game was controversial, but in the country we thought that winning it wouldn't happen. We were wrong.

PCZ: Where do you stand with games censorship? Are there any games you think should be kept from the silent masses for their own good?

Patrick: You cannot allow anybody anything at all - there

OOH SAUCY!

Thanks to the Internet, you can not only get your hands on the gore patch, but also on a patch that swaps bikinis for birthday suits. Duke Nukem would be so proud, especially as there is a patch that gives him a starring role as well. Oh, wait a minute, isn't that him in the background? It is you know (honest).



are doing. Looking at *Carmageddon* as only the game it is, done in a humorous way, there's no reason to ban it. People are just stupid if they buy something that might offend them.

Neil: There are loads of crap games that have no sense of involvement whatsoever. Ones with huge merchandising deals behind them usually have little to recommend them.

PC2: Do you think that the freedom of the environment – the fact you can go anywhere in the game – takes the focus away from what the player has to do to succeed?

Neil: We want a variety of ways in which we would subvert them – the player into finding a way of playing the game that best suited them. The point is you can play how you want. People game aren't locked to a way of playing they enjoyed.

Patrick: In a sense you shouldn't compare *Carmageddon* with other driving games because of the way everything in the game – traffic lights, buildings, people and cars – all react with each other. Every time you play the game you'll find something new. We still consult each other twice a week what we've done over the 18 months. We've allowed people to do what they always wanted in driving games: drive the other way, smash the other cars, hit the sod standing by the the road looking at you etc.

Neil: Originally the game was going to be a *Destruction Derby* type game and we wanted to allow people to drive into the crowd or take out the pit crew. Games seem to be held by this invisible barrier in their gameplay.

Patrick: The game is at least one generation ahead of anything else. The original intention was to have fun – a semi-serious game where the physics are accurate. Every other game, once you come off the track, you get pushed back on – they don't have a true interactive environment. Everything in our game is truly accurate: the way the car springs work, algorithms for anti-lock brakes and for traction control. There is no trick to make the car do a wheelie – it's all a reaction to correct physics, even understeer.

PC2: Are you God-fearing Christians or, as one might suspect, a Satan-worshipping death cult whose dark mission is to corrupt the youth of the world?

Patrick: We are perfectly normal damaged individuals. There is no religious bias, either pro or anti. Behind the games. We enjoy having a laugh and that's what comes out.

Neil: I always maintained we would go to hell for this.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Apart from the imminent arrival of *The Splat Pack*, a sequel is definitely on the cards and should be with us by this time next year. The boys refused to be discuss what might be in it.

"We managed to get the licence to mess about with Argonaut's 'BRender' graphics engine so we can take things to the next level. We can really start turning things upside down."

Patrick: Buckland is also keen to point out the philosophy that drives Stainless in their fearless pursuit of exemplary gameplay: "Our idea has always been to take a genre and rip it into pieces and do to it whatever we've always wanted to do. We want to take a game and give people the freedom they have never had. If we ever do a flight sim you'll be able to wingwalk, drop your pants and shit on people's heads." Urgh, textured polygon poo – can't wait.

Patrick: There's a lot of stuff we didn't do. For instance, the heavily pregnant woman was taken out. I wanted a kitten bursting out on impact. As you drive off, the umbilical cord, still attached in its corpse, would reach the limit of its elasticity and come back onto the windscreen. We wanted priests and nuns in there but were told the American market would crutch us.

PC2: So small children as well then?

Patrick: I was the one who didn't want small children in the game, which just goes to show what double standards I've got.

Neil: I wanted kids in, but I drew the line at dogs.

Patrick: You need more animals in there, though. It's hilarious to have exploding animals. The cows were just great.

Neil: Farm animals are okay but pets people just won't accept.

Patrick: Domestic animals like guinea pigs.

Neil: You can snap their legs in half.

Patrick: I wanted a flock of penguins waddling singly across the ice so that you could plough into all at once. We got sheep in *The Splat Pack* though – it has to be done.

PC2: Won't Jeff Minter say something about that?

Patrick: Yeah, that's true. It'll tread on his feet a bit. We'll call it *Unmangledhim*.

Neil: We could have him in there as a shepherd.

The waitress makes a timely entrance with our food.

POINTS OF VIEW

It seems everyone has something to say about *Carmageddon*. Mary Zine remarks: (we love you, David very much indeed).



(Above) The star of the *splat pack*. (Below) Neil and Patrick stand by their cars – the blood had to be taken out of this shot.



ASK AND YE SHALL RECEIVE



"Safety in numbers? I don't think so."

Great though *Carmageddon* was, there are just a few little extras we would like to have seen that perhaps will feature in *Carmageddon 2*. Of course anyone considering developing a *Carmageddon* clone is welcome to take on board the following ideas. All we require is a huge cheque and a jar of pickled babies...

1. Drive thru

Mowing down pedestrians is one thing but crashing through people's front rooms while they watch *Beadle's About* would make things far more interesting. But that's not enough. We want to crash through the front of a McDonald's and remove the stars from staff badges using a lawnmower attachment.

2. Stars in their eyes

Get your own back on TV's most hated 'stars' with celebrity appearances by Darren Day, Shane Ritchie, Noel Edmonds and Anthea Turner. Housing sampled screams by professional impressionists, this special edition won't fail to impress.

3. Guns? Pah!

Apart from the aforementioned lawnmower, we want to be able to strap on helicopter blades to take out screaming peds *Dawn Of The Dead* style. Harpoon tow-cables, giant mallets and mines. We want it! We want it now!

expressed their desire to shove status up BBFC wires. Conversely, MPs (many now ex-MPs) have made calls ranging from "Ban it!" to "Oh I'm such a bad boy, spank me harder!" Even those drabbling guardians of democracy, the House of Lords, have been filling their colonnades with over the game as if it's some kind of satanic death rule game. They probably found out that if you play it backwards the engine noises actually sound like "Mmm Satan is hot, mmm Satan is hot!"

Looking back at the controversy that surrounded games like *Batman Returns*

Mortal Kombat when they were first released, it all seems laughable that people became so incensed that they called for them to be banned. As graphics become increasingly life-like, however, the establishment and the media that drive it will shout even louder to stifle creativity in what is essentially a fun industry. Paradoxically, it looks like the technology that gives us better and better graphics could take its toll on those of us who just want to have a laugh. "Come on, arrest these men..."

WHAT THE BOYS AT SCI SAID

SCI, publishers of *Carmageddon*, have been accused of actively courting controversy. Was it true that they misjudged their marketing campaign and perhaps pushed things a bit too far? We asked David Ratcliffe, Operations Manager at SCI.

PCZ: Why did you take the game to the BBFC when there was no legal requirement to do so?

David: The whole question of whether a game must legally be submitted to the BBFC is a very grey area. The actual act that computer games fall under is the Video Recordings Act (computer games are considered 'video works' by the law). Within the act, computer titles are granted exemption from the legal classification system (in this case the BBFC) if they do not contain certain items. These are: violence to human or human-like characters, violence to animals or animal-like characters, sexually explicit material and any other obscene material. The industry, through ELSA, has a self-regulatory system where computer games are submitted to the Video Standards Council for a voluntary rating. The VSC had viewed *Carmageddon* and eventually decided to recommend an 18+ rating on the game and stated that in their opinion it did not need to be submitted to the BBFC.

However, at the beginning of the year, SCI sent out a series of press releases to both the national and regional press. This had the unfortunate effect of hitting at the time the election campaign started and suddenly several MPs jumped on the bandwagon. There were reports of killing children, as well as a great headline "Pope says ban game!" (Pope being a journo, not the bishop of St Peters), which led to questions being asked by a MP called Ronnie Campbell in the House of Commons, followed by questions in the House of Lords. Then the BBFC was



BAN DEATH GAME NOW: POPE



MP brands it 'utterly horrific and appalling'

called to the Home Office to answer questions about *Carmageddon*. They could not do so because the game had not been submitted to them.

What we had not counted on was the nature of the BBFC. As you may be aware, we are now appealing their decision and, to put this in context, *Carmageddon* is the first computer game to be refused a certificate and the first game to appeal a decision.

PCZ: Were you surprised that the game was banned and wasn't it all just a publicity stunt that backfired?

David: It was certainly not a publicity stunt. It cost us well over £20,000 in legal fees alone for the BBFC submission, not to mention the wasted money on stock already produced etc.

The appeal itself is also costing us thousands.

If you look at the first batch of *Carmageddon* games to be released, you would find they contained three addendum sheets as well as a manual with whole pages blocked out in red, which we had done to try to get the BBFC certificate. At that point our Production Manager was at the printers waiting to make more changes to the manual by hand.

While the submission was happening, we were working hard to make sure we got no publicity so that it would not have any adverse effect on the BBFC decision.



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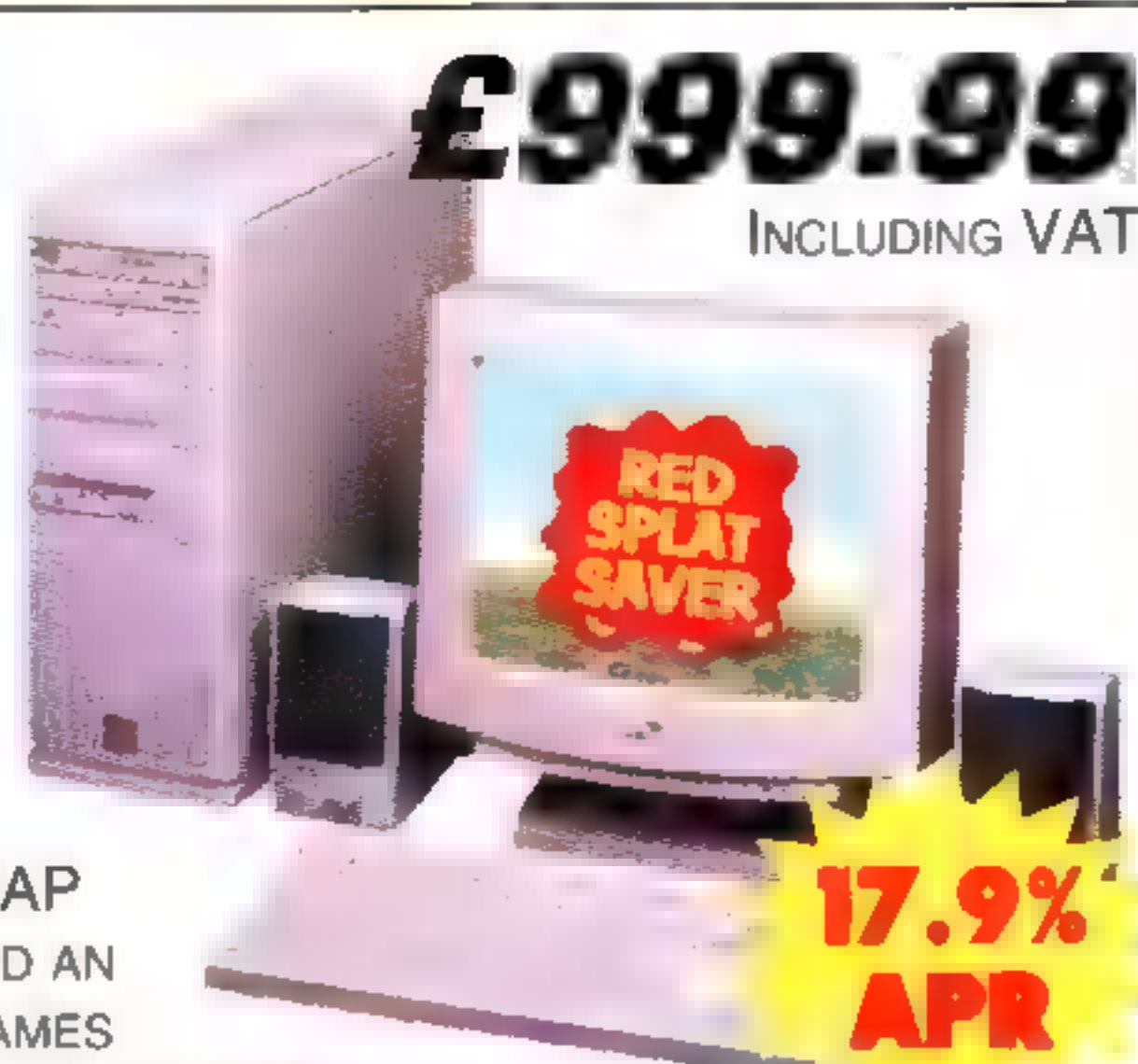
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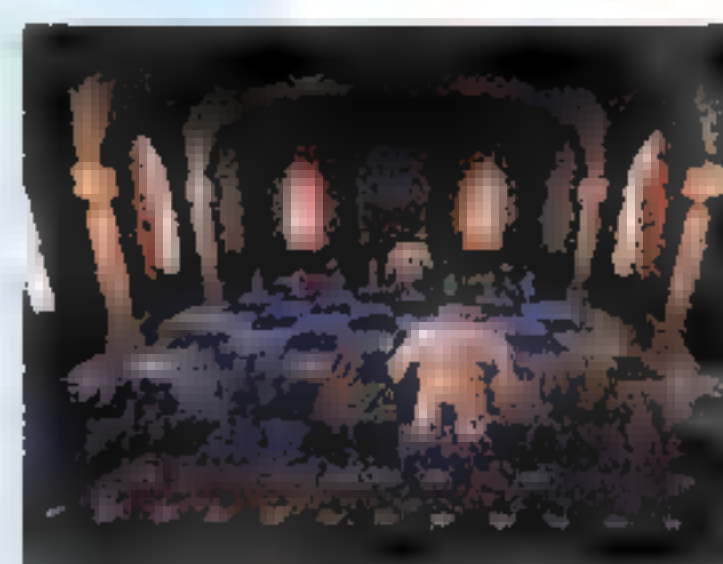
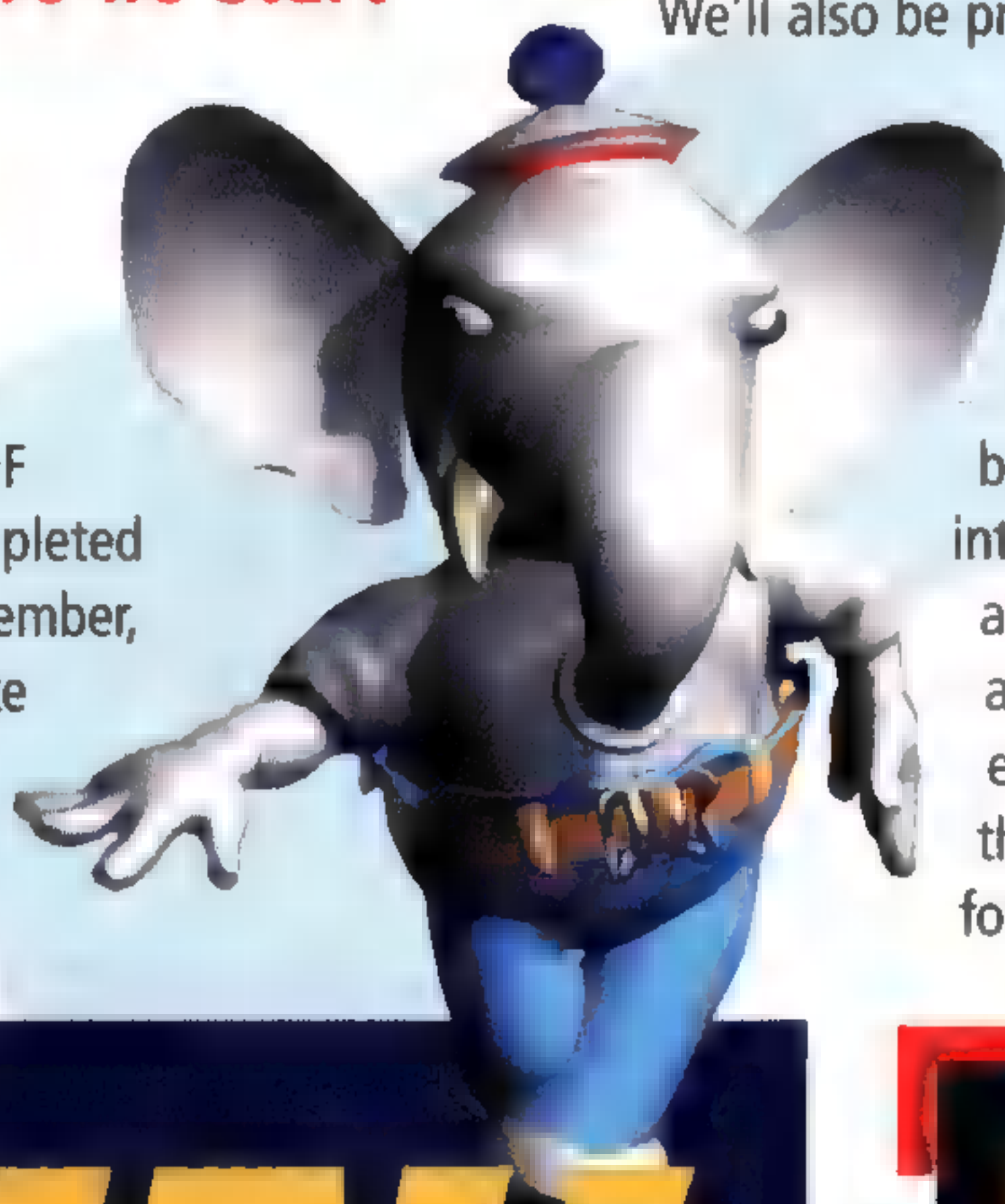
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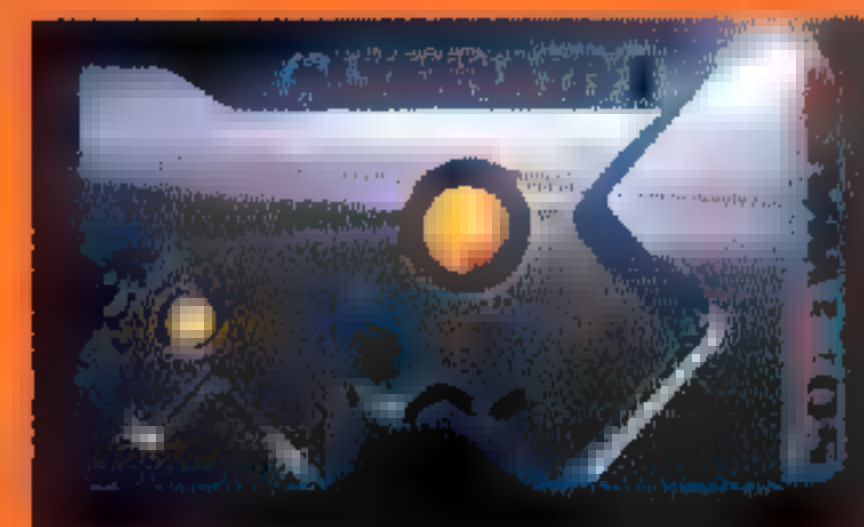
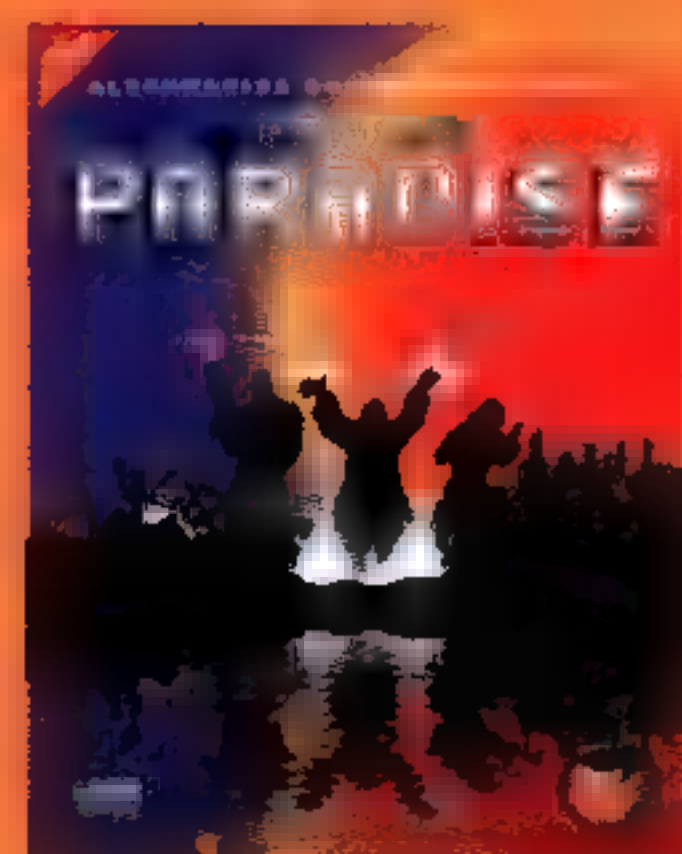
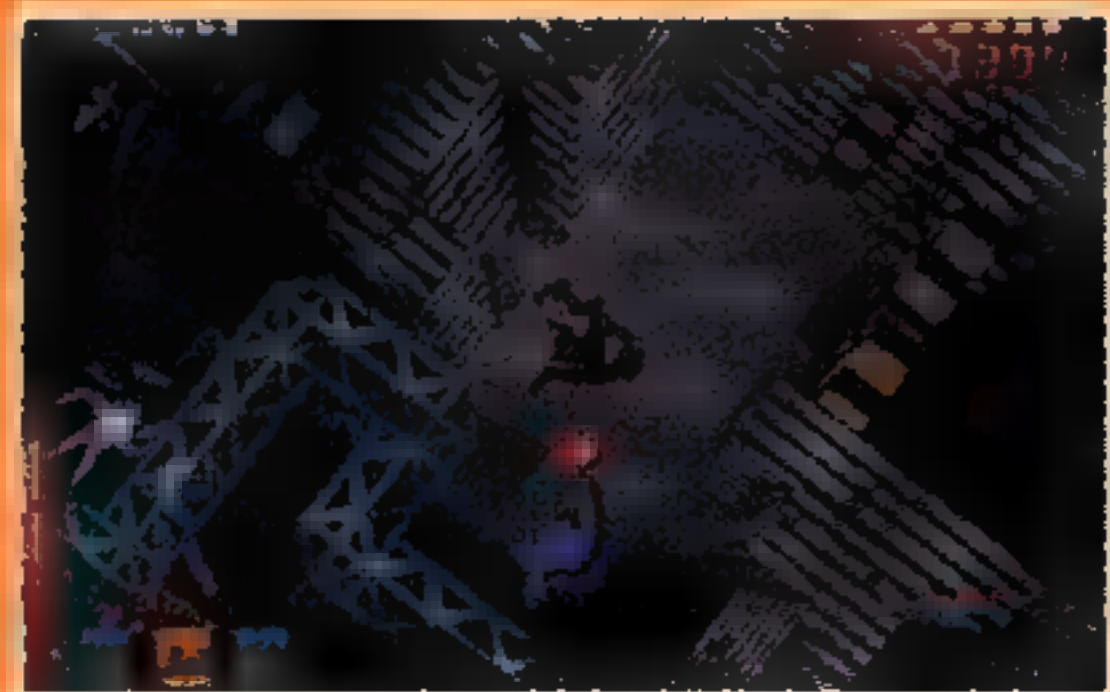
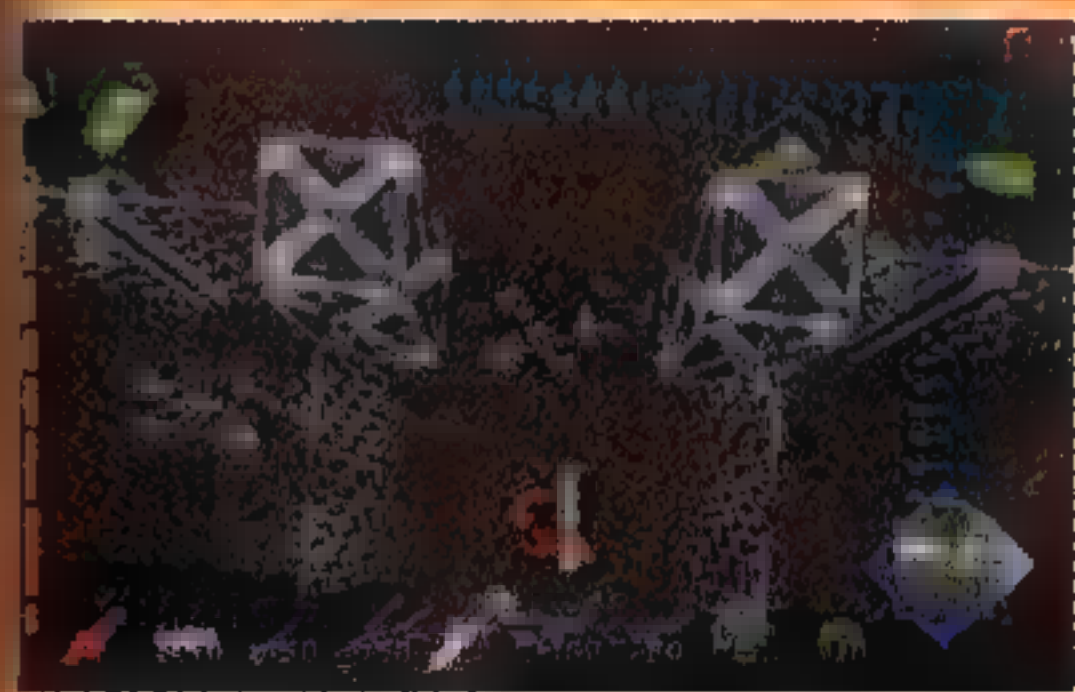
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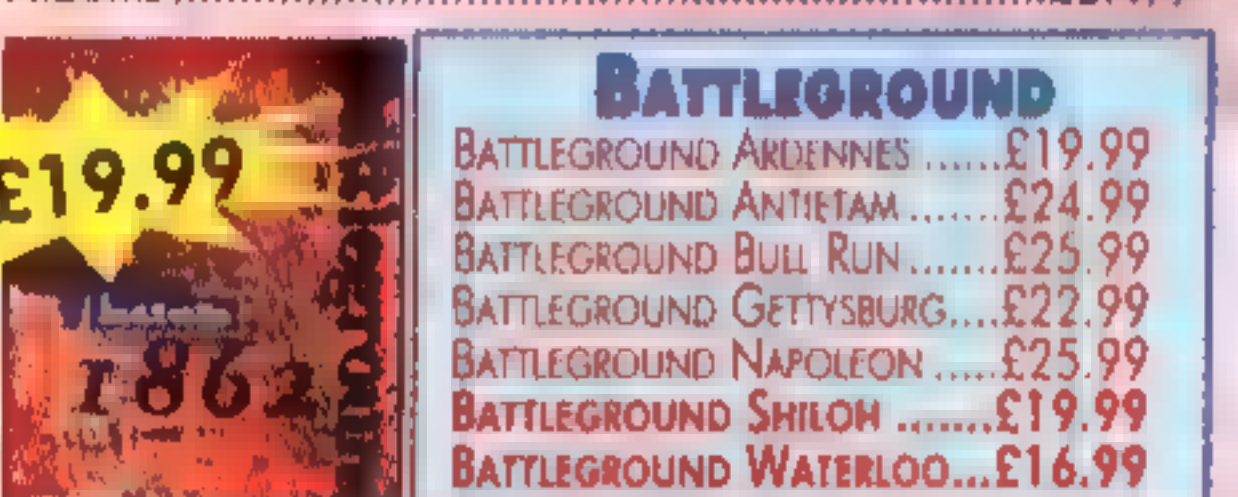
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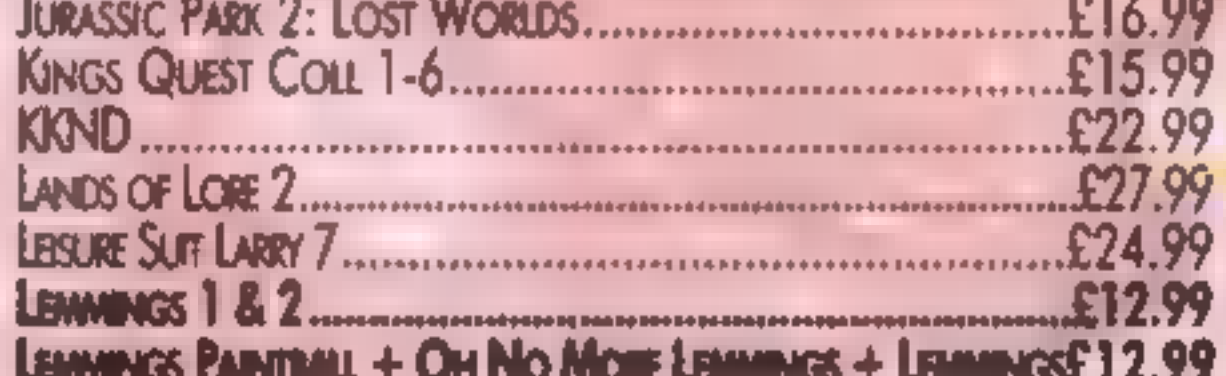
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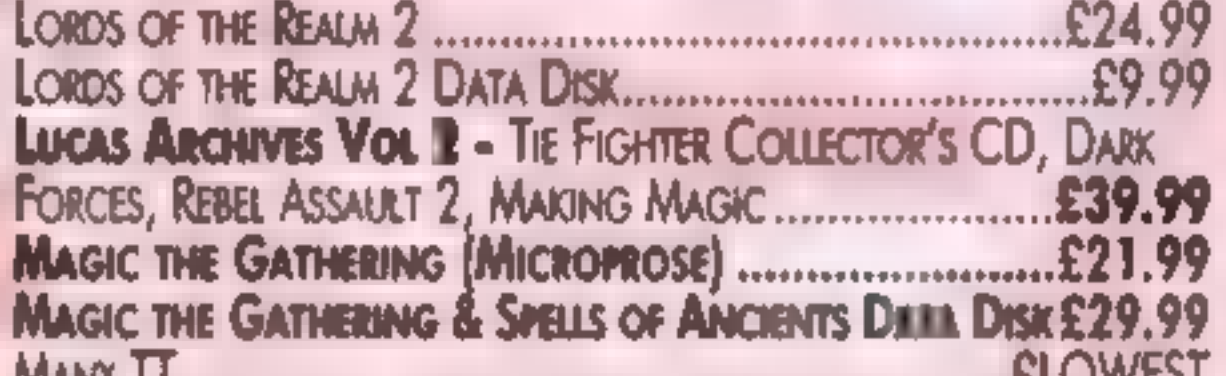
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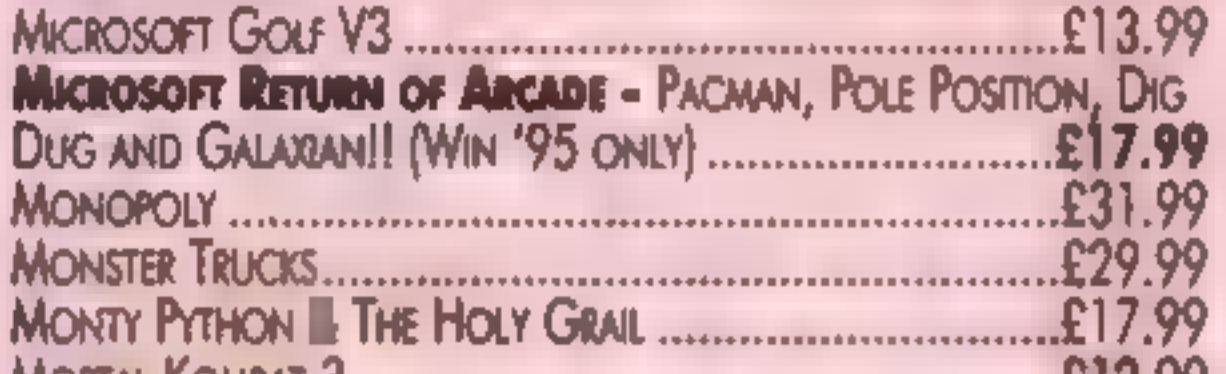
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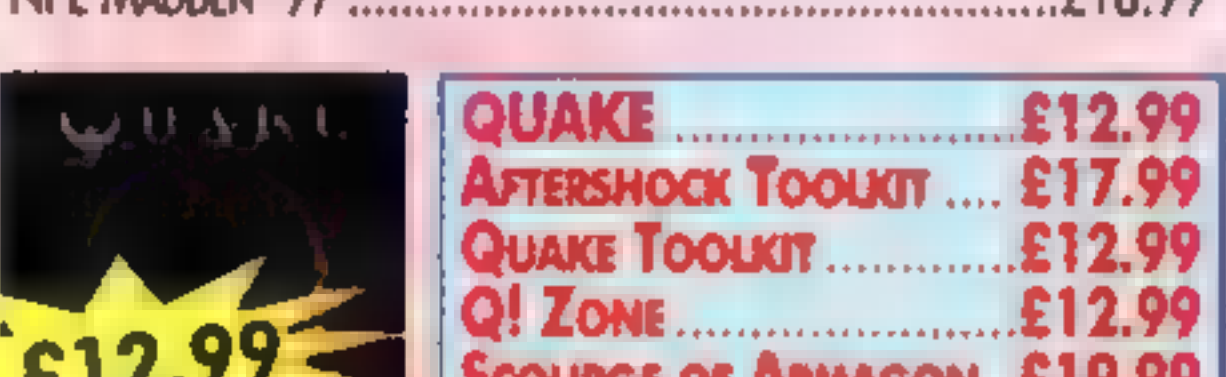
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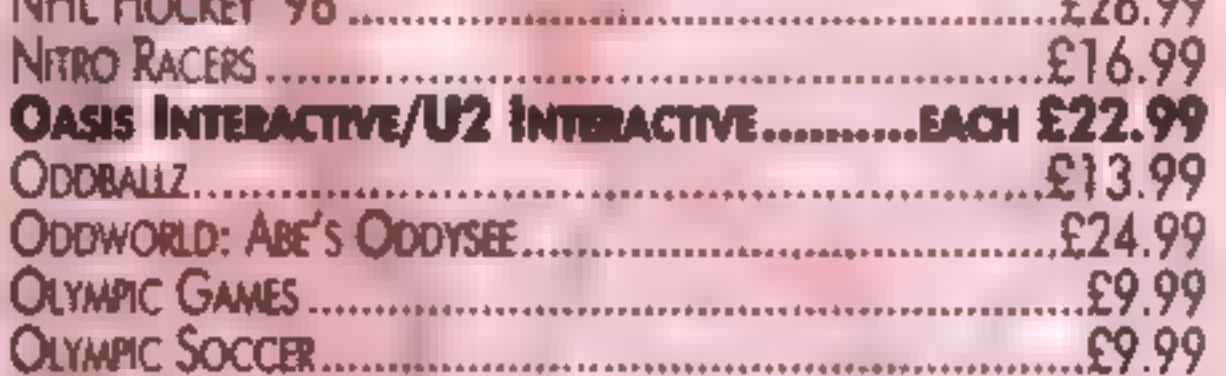
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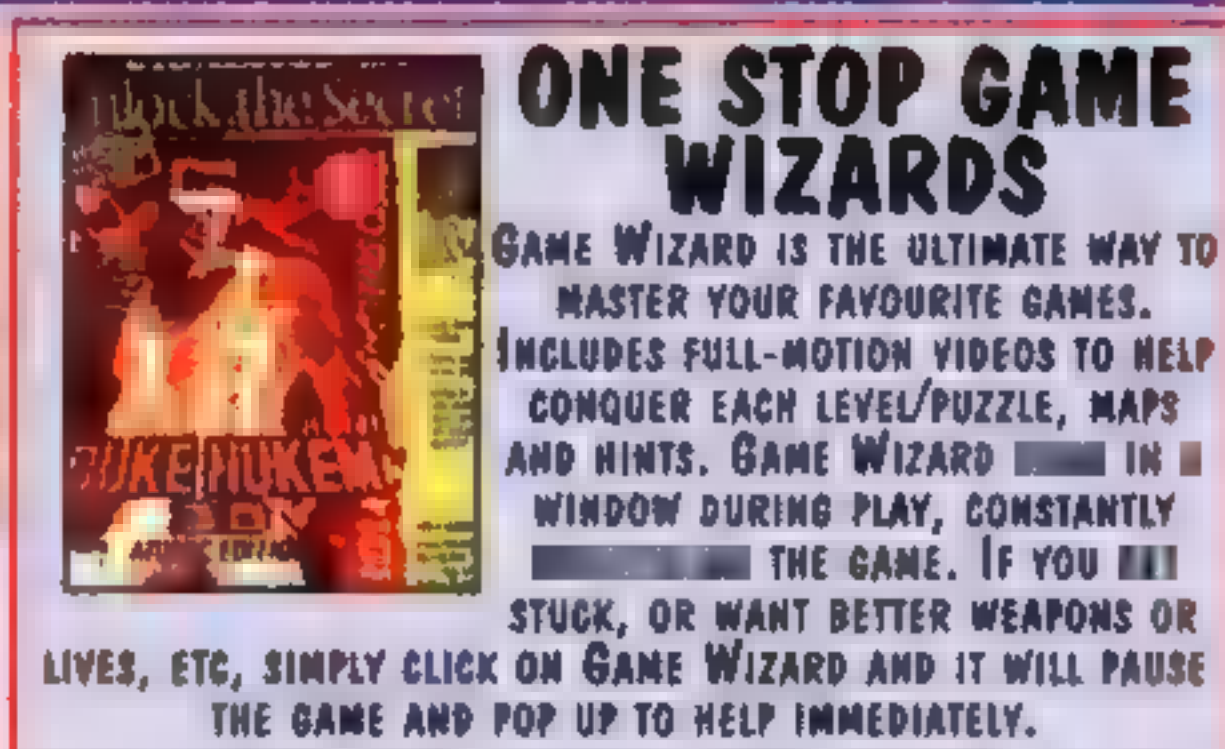
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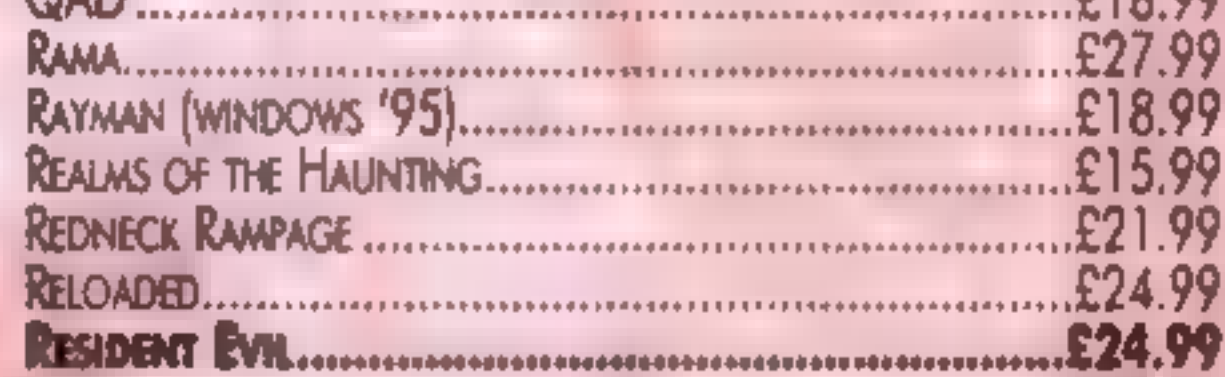


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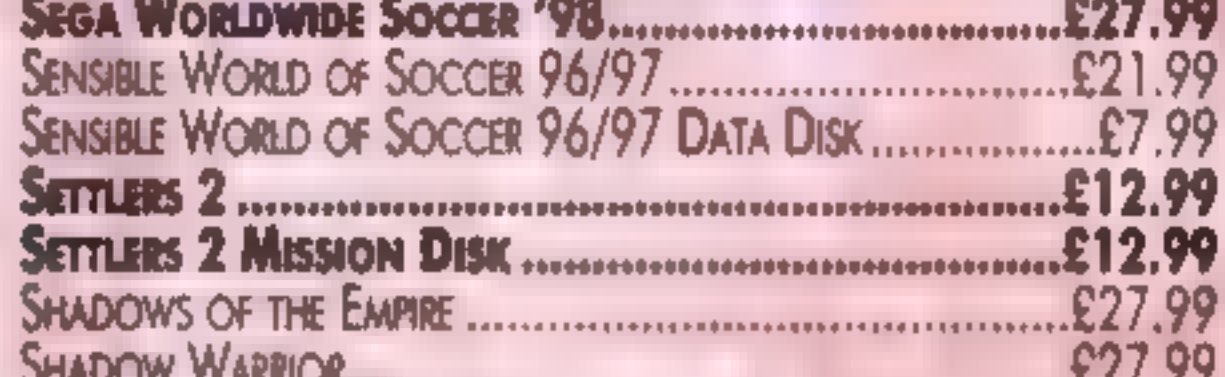
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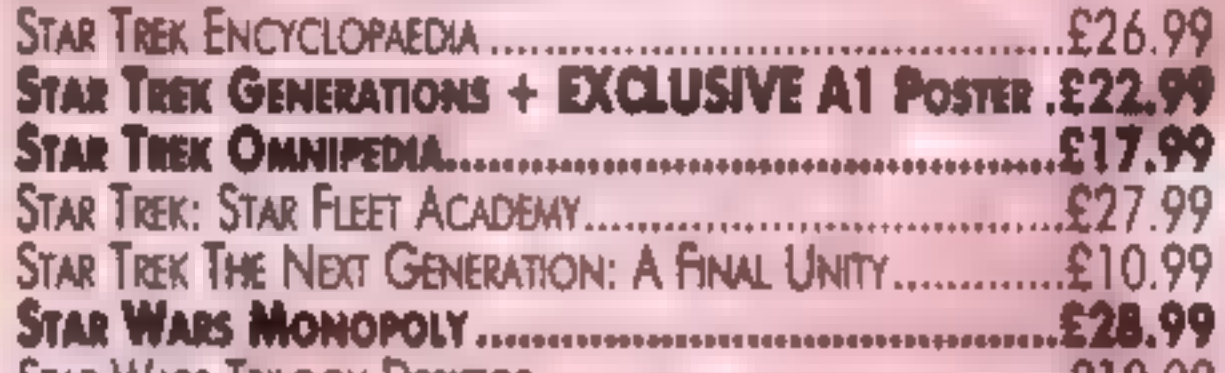
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ISSUE No. **PCY(12)**
SWITCH ONLY

80's PORN GIRL SOCCER

Remember the Eighties? Of course you do: chances ■■■ they were the best days of your life. But what was the very greatest thing about them? The unforgettable **music**? The dogged pursuit of **money**? The soothing 'designer' **pastels**? No. It was the **Porn Girls**.

Whether standing upright and grinning awkwardly outside Hull station for a chilly **Fiesta** photoshoot, or soaping **bosom** and **crotch** to a cheap synthesiser soundtrack in ■■■ luridly overlit Electric Blue production, the Eighties Porn Girl always conducted herself with poise, glamour, and ■■■ certain **silent dignity**. And as she did ■■■ she **enchanted** ■■■ entire generation of impressionable teenage boys. The **ra-ra** skirts. The **boob jobs**. The **frizzy perms**. The **virulent pink** eyeshadow. The towering intellectual **majesty**. We shall ■■■■ ■■■ their like again...

...or shall we?

Oh yea we will- thanks to **Eighties Porn Girl Soccer**! Eighties Porn Girl Soccer is the ultimate in bare-breasted sporting entertainment. All the features you've come to expect from a cutting-edge PC simulation ■■■ here- with ■■■ very important addition. That's right. Every team consists of nothing but Eighties Porn Girls. Completely bare. Everything laid out for all the world to see. No kidding. You can see it all. The full works. You know: bum, boobs, fanny, the lot. Utterly nude, they ■■■. Starkers.

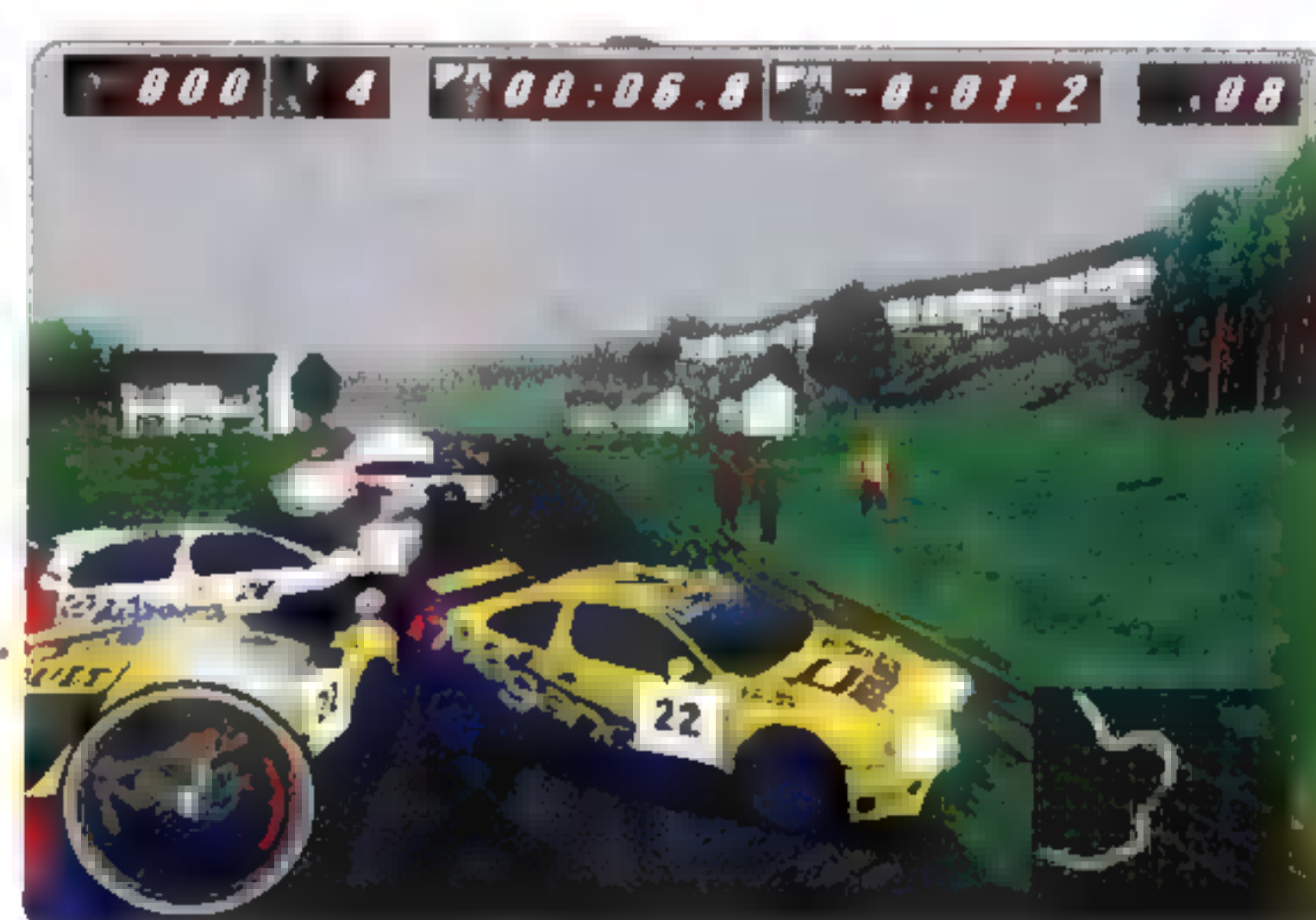
There isn't a stitch of clothing in sight. ■■■ nature intended they came into this world, and by God, they're not about to get dressed up just for a game of soccer. They're naked. Totally, totally naked. They do not have any clothes on.

Beware of Imitations!

Other games simply fob you off with teams full of dull, male, fully-clothed players. **Ours** are young, female, and very very nude. If you are offended by nakedness, do not buy this game, because it's jam-packed with the stuff. Really. It's an **unremitting cavalcade** of unclothed breasts, buttocks, and front-bottoms. **THIS GAME CONTAINS NUDITY.**

The Cybertwats make their grand re-appearance next month. CHARLIE BROOKER...

GET REAL GET RALLY



The best got even better! International Rally Championship - successor to the chart-topping RAC Rally Championship - roars onto the PC with an immaculate pedigree and a breathtaking collection of new features.

You're on final countdown to the drive of your life. From desert sands, to mountain passes and equatorial jungles, you pilot one of nine completely new rally-tuned cars round 15 international circuits designed to challenge the bravest driver.

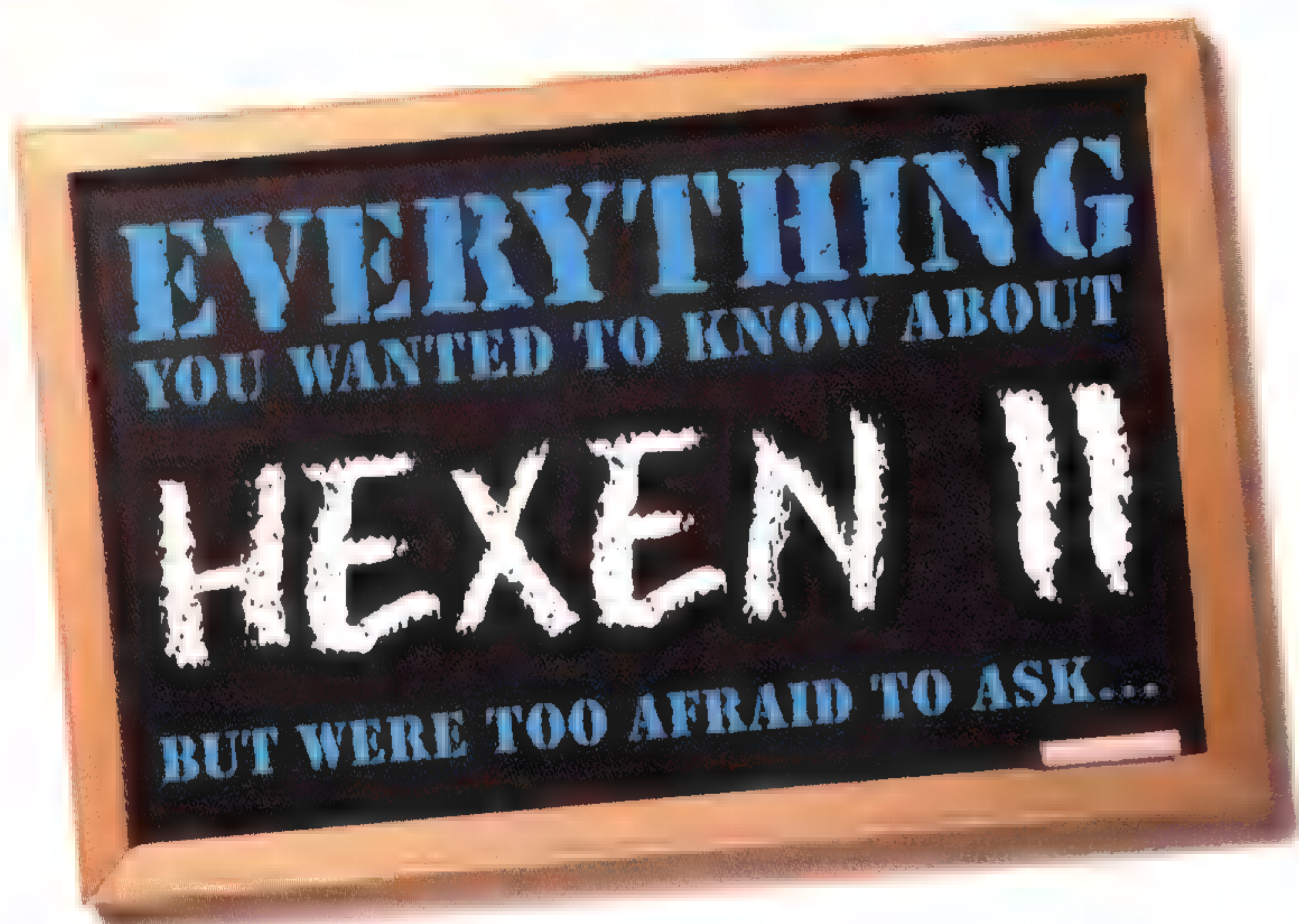
Can you cope with the high-octane blood rush that only comes from the cream of driving simulations? This is the way to find out.

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- Nine of the latest rally-bred cars
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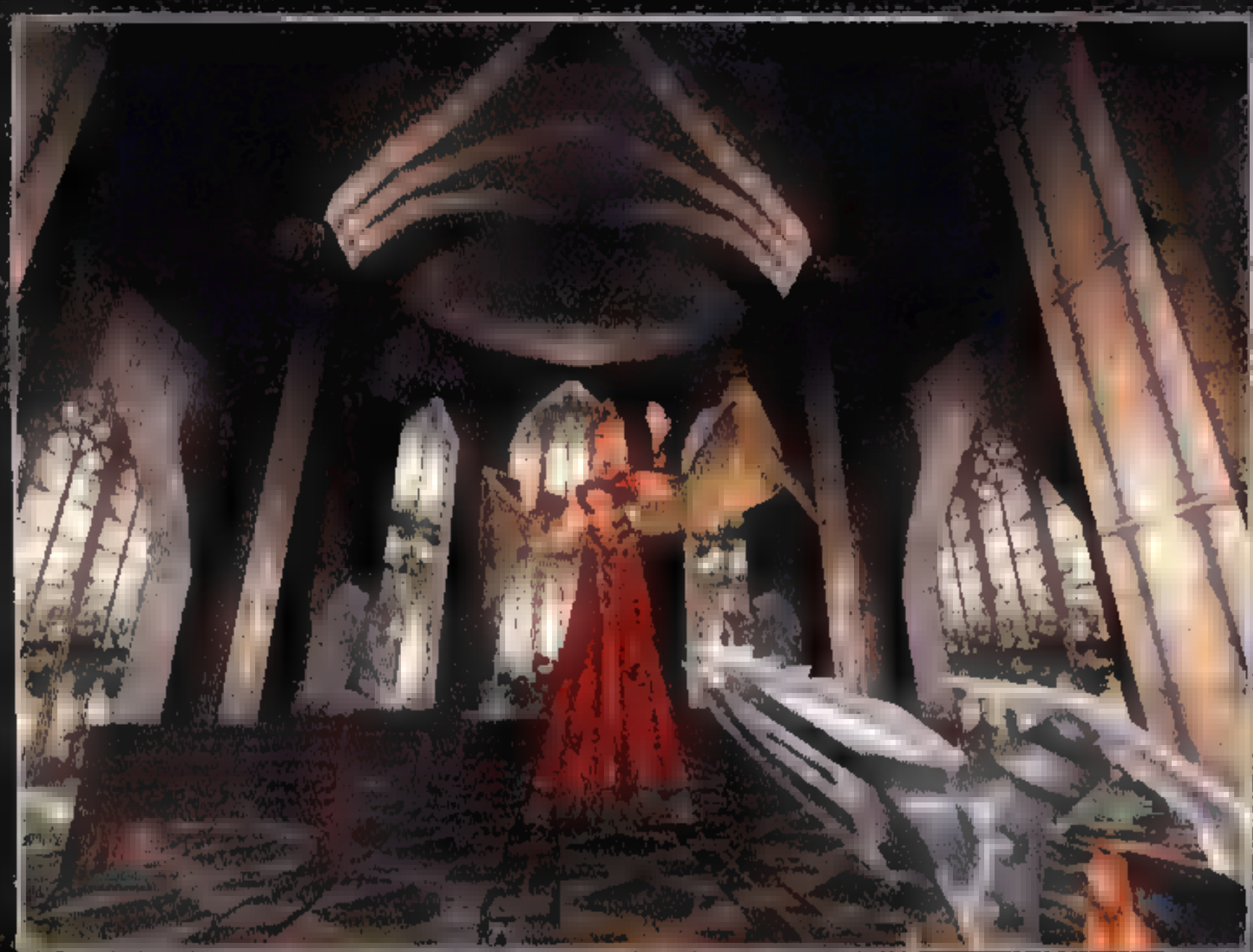
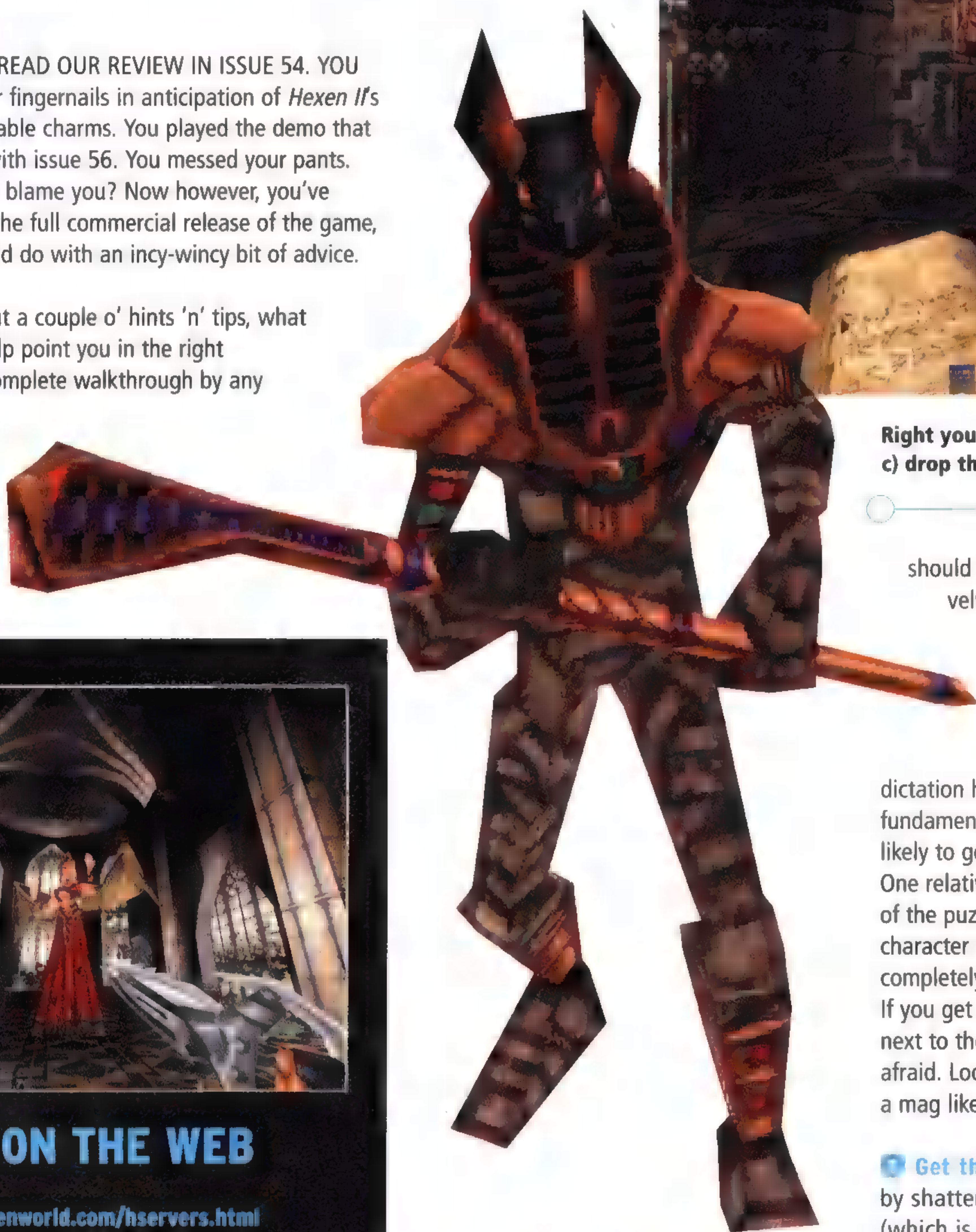
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O, YOU READ OUR REVIEW IN ISSUE 54. YOU bit your fingernails in anticipation of *Hexen II*'s undeniable charms. You played the demo that came with issue 56. You messed your pants. Who can blame you? Now however, you've purchased the full commercial release of the game, and you figure you could do with an incy-wincy bit of advice. Well, look no further...

Alongside dishing out a couple o' hints 'n' tips, what we're going to do is help point you in the right direction. This isn't a complete walkthrough by any means, but it will give you a few pointers if you're stuck in the early sections of the game (ie Hub numero uno). Hopefully, this



HEXEN II ON THE WEB

<http://ironman.hexenworld.com/hservers.html>

A list of *Hexen II* servers, complete with information on how many people are currently playing.

<http://www.activision.com/games/action/hexenII/>

An official site, with information on the *Hexen II* Ring o' Websites.

<http://www.hexen2.com>

A fairly comprehensive *Hex*-o-centric web lair.

<http://www.hexenworld.com/>

Home to a veritable cathedral-full of *Hexen II* files, info, walkthrough demonstrations, and more.

No one's ever called **Charlie Brooker** a coward. Not until he started playing *Hexen II*, that is. Then he became the most adept player at running away – particularly during a deathmatch. Vowing to rid himself of his tarnished image, Charlie decided to gen up on the game so his grandchildren would know him as a *Hexen* hero rather than a lily-livered layabout...



Right you need to a) wash your hands, b) cut your nails and c) drop the freaking spell book.

should ease you gently into *Hexen II*'s warmer and more velvety sections. Think of us as a kind of shoehorn. Or a large tub of K-Y Jelly. Or some Baby Lotion. Or a gooey handful of (We get the picture – Ed.)

Hub One: Blackmarsh

We're not going to give you step-by-step dictation here – instead we will just concentrate on the fundamentals, taking it from the point at which you're most likely to get stuck first – the search for the Tailor's key. One relatively important point to bear in mind is that some of the puzzles change according to a) difficulty setting and b) character class. At the time of going to press, we can't be completely certain if these solutions will work on all settings. If you get completely stuck (say, you can't find the button next to the fireplace), you're on your own for a while, we're afraid. Look, just leave off, okay? Do you think it's easy putting a mag like this together?

Get the tailor's key: Go to the Forgotten Chapel level by shattering the stained glass behind the guillotine (which is in the Inner Courtyard). Anyway, back in the chapel, you'll need to push one of the angels behind the altar – the third from the right to be precise. Drop into the hole, smash up the web-encrusted corpse, et voilà! The tailor's key.

Find the Disrupt Magic scroll: Scamper over to the King's Court and enter the tailor's shop. Upstairs you'll find a cabinet. Hey, you've got the key. Hooray. There's a pseudo wall behind the cabinet – smash it up and you've got the scroll, which is going to come in handy later...

shovel: Enter the stables. Climb into the loft and find the secret door (it's up in the roof beams). Inside is a lever, which opens another door. Behind that is the shovel. Oh, and a bad guy. Have fun.



Forever ones to dispense good advice: one quick tip for you – go out to the shops and buy a 3Dfx card immediately.

4 Dig up the Treasury key: Go to the Inner Courtyard. Find Anton's grave (drop off the walkway and it's easy to find). Just stand over it and the hard work's done for you. Cool.

5 Locate the Amulet of Hunger

Enter the Palace. In the corridor behind the fountain is the Treasury. Pick up the Amulet from here.

6 Altar of Hunger: Go back to the King's Court and enter 'Ye Shoppe'. Go upstairs and smash the crap out of the false wall (it's darker than the rest). Behind it is the altar. Go inside and put your reading specs on.

7 Stable key: Go to the stables. Find the blacksmiths and run upstairs. Push the button beside the fireplace, which should now open. Inside is the stable key.

8 Find some sand: Go back to the loft, go up ramp, and go to a locked door in this area. Open the door, go into room, and go down a ramp. Destroy the false door, open the next door. Sand is in this room.

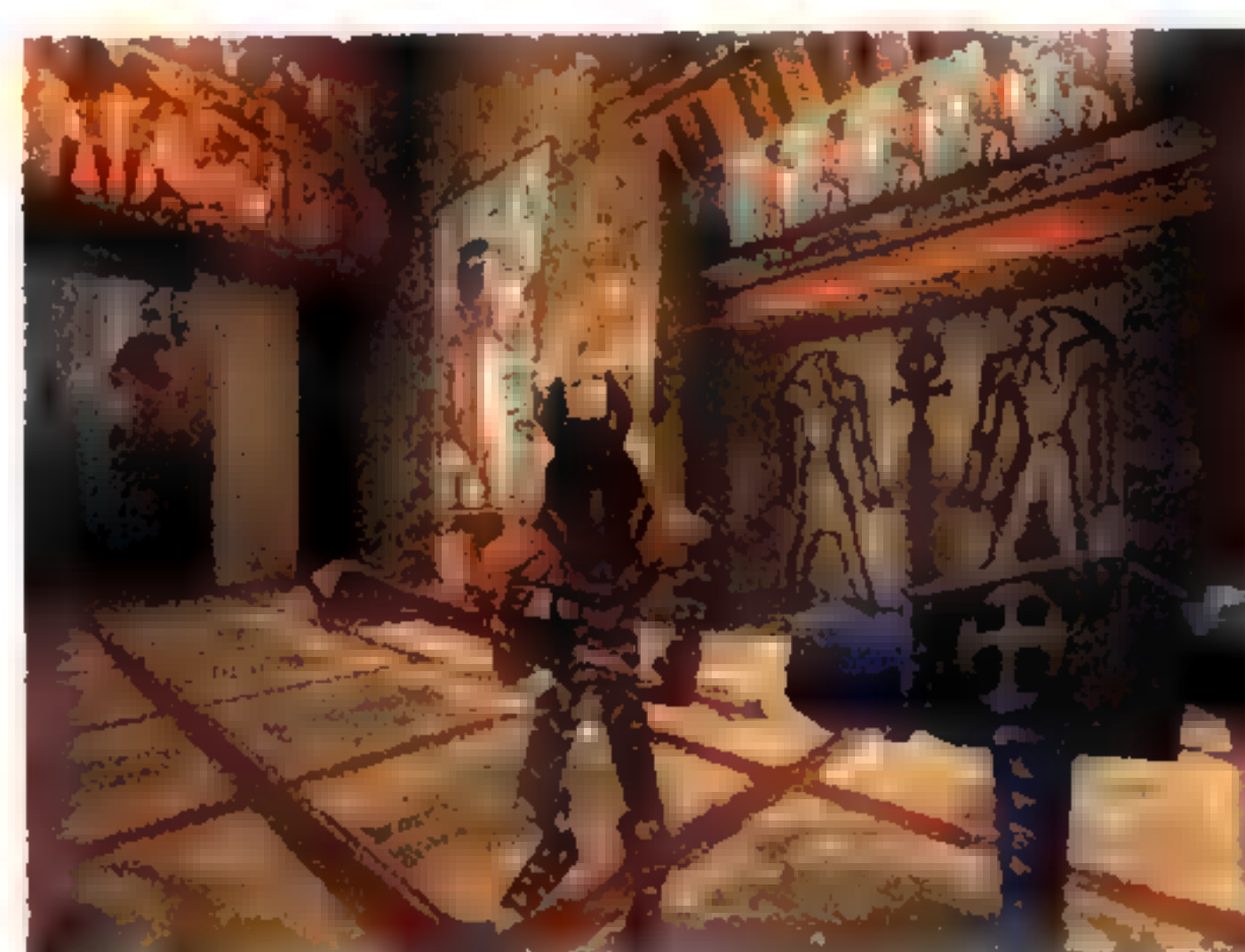
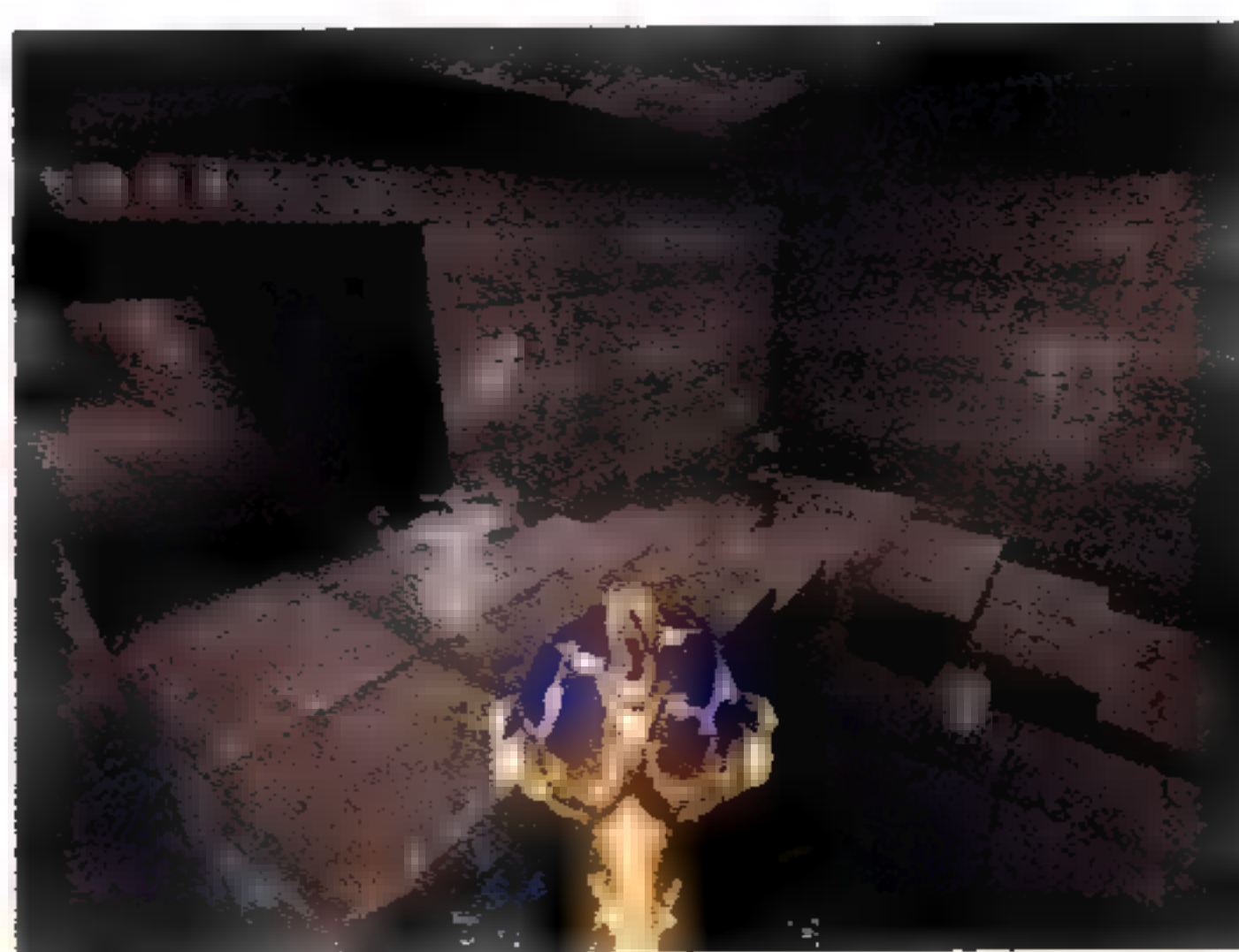
9 Where the @#E\$! do I get a glass bead?: Simple: take the sand (which is behind the locked 'stable key' door) to the blacksmiths on the stable level. Go to the forge and bingo. Glass.

10 Now turn the glass into a lens: Go to the Inner Courtyard and head right. Enter the building and climb upstairs. Inside the fireplace you'll find some sneaky steps. Jump up and go to the giant grindstone. This will create a lens – make sure you pick it up.

11 How do I get through that wall with the 'invisible forces'?: Go to the room with the big mural on the wall and the scary message about "invisible forces" and "Ooh, if only you could see through here, eee, you'd pap yourself". Having got the lens you should now be able to see through it. Walk into the teleporter and enter the portal. You now have the ability to kill Golems. This is more significant than you might think...

12 Kill the Golem: Run to the guillotine and drop through the head receptacle. Go through the teleporter and kill everyone. You should now be able to approach a red teleporter. Go on. I dare you.

13 Confront Famine, Horseman of the Apocalypse: Your best bet for surviving an encounter with Famine (apart from – ho ho! – applying for Red Cross aid) is simple – keep on your toes. And consider this: he's far, *far* easier to kill than the other horsemen. Keep 'em crossed. **7**



(Top) Hey you, freeze! Ha. Ha ha. Ho ho ho. Tee. Hee. Ha. (Middle) Don't forget to crouch each time you encounter an eight-legged antagonist. (Bottom) This shot is from the Egyptian section of the game, and is therefore irrelevant to this article. But we like it anyway.

(Right) Just type **IMPULSE 14** at the console, and you too can be a sheep. Like you aren't already.

(Left) Some water, a bridge, a hammer, and a bloke with a bow and arrow. That'll be *Hexen II* then.



WARNING: It may be tempting to use these cheats, but bear in mind that they will lessen your enjoyment of the game as a whole. Really. It's far more satisfying to play *Hexen II* as it was intended to be played. We *could* have given you a bunch of level skip cheats too, but we're holding on to them for a while. Just get on with the game. Okay?

MEN JUST CAN'T HELP ACTING ON IMPULSE

Are you a ne'er-do-well? A cheating little swine? A fraud? A charlatan? When confronted with a 100m sprinting contest, do you cripple your opponents with a shattering hammer blow to the knees, then complete the course on rollerblades? Good. Then you'll like these *Hexen II* cheats. Simply bring up the console during a game of *Hexen II* (just press that weird button next to your number '1' key), then type in any of the following:

GOD Toggle invincibility mode on or off.

IMPULSE 9 You now have all the weapons available in your class, Sir.

IMPULSE 14 You have turned into a sheep. Really.

IMPULSE 23 Shed a little light on things.

IMPULSE 25 The Tome of Power is all yours.

IMPULSE 39 Toggle flight mode on/off.

IMPULSE 40 Gain an experience level.

IMPULSE 43 Hooray. You've got loads of keys, amulets, lucky brooches, etc...

IMPULSE 99 Restart the current level.

GIVE H XXX Give yourself a health boost (the Xs refer to the amount).

NOCLIP Turns off the clipping, allowing you to run through walls like a ghost. Oooh.

CHASE_ACTIVE 1 View the proceedings through a flight sim-style 'chase camera'. Replacing the '1' with a zero turns it back to normal.



Here's a tip – as you fly over the wall, pull back. You'll land on a ledge and catch some goodies. Hooray.

WIN WIN WIN

This fabulous
"Dell" PC



As if having an influence over the future of the world's finest PC games magazine wasn't enough for you, we're giving you the chance to win a fantastic PC – just to convince you that it's something worth doing.



As games require more and more power, you're really going to need a ninja-scope machine – something like this maybe? Thanks to Interplay, the first lucky Reader Survey drawn from the bag on November 21st will win its sender this fantastic Dell PC...

- Dell P200 MMX
- 32Mb
- 4Mb video card
- 3Dfx
- Awe64 Sound card
- Internal modem
- 3Gb hard drive

• A copy of *Star Trek: Star Fleet Academy*

Ten further surveys drawn from the bag will each win themselves a copy of the game that Trekkies are going gooey over at the moment, *Star Trek: Star Fleet Academy* (which scored 87% last issue).

Send your completed Reader Survey to...

PC Zone Reader Survey (Dec 97), CPZ912A, Freepost WD7, Bristol BS12 0BR

Rules: All entries to be received by 21 November 1997. One entry per household – repeated entries will be removed from the draw. No correspondence will be entered into.

**PC
ZONE**

Interplay

Fill this in Now
and you could win



Your PC

1 What kind of processor does your PC have and what is its clock-speed? (If you have more than one PC, tick the one you usually use for playing games)

486SX	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (6)	33MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (7)
486DX	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	40MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
486DX/2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	50MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
486DX/4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	60MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Pentium	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	66MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	75MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
486DX/2 OverDrive	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	90MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Pentium OverDrive	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	100MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Pentium MMX	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	120MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
Pentium II	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	133MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 0
		166MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> x
		200MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> v
		233MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (8)
		266MHz	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

2 Which of the following bus slot types are fitted in your computer?

ISA	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (9)
Vesa LB	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
PCI	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

3 In total, how much RAM (memory) do you have fitted?

4Mb or less	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (10)
8Mb	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
12Mb	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
16Mb	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
32Mb	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
More than 32Mb	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

4 What was the last computer or games console you used regularly for games?

This is my first	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (11)
Another PC	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Amiga/ST	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
MegaDrive/SNES	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Sony PlayStation	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Nintendo 64	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Sega Saturn	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Other games console	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Other computer	<input type="checkbox"/> 9

What you buy

5 Roughly, how often have you tended to upgrade your PC since you first bought one?

Every year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (12)
Every 18 months	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Every 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Every 3-4 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Less often	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Haven't upgraded yet	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

6 Are you intending to replace your computer in the next 12 months?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (13)
No	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

7 If yes, what do you intend to buy?

Pentium PC	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (14)
Pentium MMX	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Pentium II	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
PC with other processor	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Other computer/games console	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

8 Are you intending to upgrade your existing computer in the next 12 months?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (15)
No	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

9 Do you currently own, intend to buy or replace any of the following?

	Own	Intend to buy	Intend to upgrade
Modem	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (16)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (17)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (18)
3D Accelerator			
Card	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
CD-ROM	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Sound card	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
MPEG card	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Joystick	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Video card	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Hard drive	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Extra RAM	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9

10 How much do you intend to spend on hardware for your PC and/or for a new PC over the next year?

Nothing	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (19)
Up to £299	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
£300-£599	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
£600-£999	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
£1000-£1999	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
£2000-£4999	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
£5000 or more	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

11 On average how much do you spend on PC games in 3 months?

	For home	For work
Up to £49	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (20)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (21)
£50-£99	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
£100-£199	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
£200-£399	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
£400 or over	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

12 Has a demo on the front cover CD ever influenced your decision to purchase the full game?

Yes-frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (22)
Yes-occasionally	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
No-never	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

13 Which of the following influences your decision to buy a game?

Review in PC Zone	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (23)
Subject matter/genre	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Review in other mags	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Word of mouth/comments on-line	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Review on TV/radio	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Packaging	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

14 What makes you aware of the games you buy?

Coverage in PC Zone	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (24)
Coverage in other mags	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Advertising	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Word of mouth/comments on-line	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Coverage on TV/radio	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

15 Where do you typically buy your games software?

Mail order	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (25)
Retail outlet	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

16 If you buy games from retail, where do you shop?

Virgin/Our Price	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (26)
Electronic Boutique	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
HMV	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Game	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
WH Smith	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Blockbuster	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Woolworths	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Supermarkets	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Dixons	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
PC World	<input type="checkbox"/> 0
Independent retailer	<input type="checkbox"/> x

17 Do you ever rent games software?

Yes-frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (27)
Yes-occasionally	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
No-never	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

18 Have you ever purchased a product or service as a result of seeing it reviewed/advertised in PC Zone?

	Review	Advert
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (28)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (29)
No	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

What do you do with your PC

19 How many hours a week do you spend...

	A	B	C
Less than 1 hr	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (30)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (31)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (32)
1-2 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
3-4 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
5-6 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
6-10 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
10-15 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
15-20 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
20 hrs or more	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

20 Do you use multiplayer games...

Across the Internet	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (33)
At a cyber cafe	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Across a network	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
With a multiplayer BBS	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

21 How interested are you in Internet gaming?

	(Please tick one box only)
Very interested	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (34)
Interested	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Indifferent	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Not interested	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

22 Are you put off buying a title because of the minimum hardware specification required?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (35)
No	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

23 Have you ever upgraded your PC in order to make it compatible with a game you wanted?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (36)
No	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

If yes, which game was this:

24 Approximately what percentage of time spent on your PC is taken up with playing games?

76-100%	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (37)
51-75%	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
26-50%	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
25% or less	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

25 What else do you use your home PC for?

	(Please tick all that apply)
Education/information	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (38)
Design/graphics	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Music	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Programming	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Finance/organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

26 Are you on-line and if so through which service?

AOL	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (39)
MSN	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
CompuServe	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Internet provider-please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

No, but I intend to be soon

No	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
----	----------------------------

27 Have you accessed the PC Zone web site?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 (40)
No	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Didn't know it existed	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
I am not on-line	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

28 If yes, on a scale of 1-10 how do you rate the following sections of the PC Zone web site:

	(where 1=poor and 10=very good?)
Bulletin	(41)
Reviews	(42)
Chat	(43)
Troubleshooter	(44)
PC Zone multiplayer server	(45)

29 What do you think about the amount of coverage which PC Zone gives to multi-player Internet games?

Too much ☐ 1 (46)
Just right ☐ 2
Not enough ☐ 3

30 Which of the following statements best reflect your current attitude to the Net? (Please tick all that apply).

It's a useful source of information ☐ 1 (47)
It's great fun ☐ 2
It's slow and frustrating ☐ 3
It's difficult to find what you want ☐ 4
It's just full of porn ☐ 5
It's better than I expected ☐ 6
It should remain uncensored ☐ 7

31 What do you primarily use on-line services/the Internet for?

E-mail ☐ 1 (48)
Technical support ☐ 2
Reference ☐ 3
Chat ☐ 4
Gaming ☐ 5
Surfing about not looking for anything in particular ☐ 6
Downloading software demos ☐ 7
Purchasing products/services ☐ 8

32 Do you run Windows 95?

Yes ☐ 1 (49)
No, but I intend to soon ☐ 2
No ☐ 3

33 What types of game do you play?

(Please tick all that apply)

	At home	At work
Quake-style	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(50)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(51)
'Real-time' strategy (eg. C+C)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Simulations	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Graphic adventures	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Arcade	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
RPGs	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Sports	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

What you think of magazines

34 Do you buy PC Zone...

On subscription ☐ 1 (52)
Newsagent-every month ☐ 2
Newsagent-most months ☐ 3
Newsagent-occasionally ☐ 4

35 How many other people read your copy of PC Zone?

None ☐ 1 (53)
1 ☐ 2
2 ☐ 3
3 ☐ 4
More than 3 ☐ 5

36 On a scale of 1 to 10, how do the following elements affect your decision to buy PC Zone?

1=no influence: 10= very influential

Contents of cover disk	(54)
What's reviewed	(55)
What's previewed	(56)
Feature content	(57)
Competitions	(58)
Contains hints for games you have	(59)

37 Do you normally buy the floppy disk or CD-ROM version of PC Zone?

HD ☐ 1(60)
CD ☐ 2

38 If you buy the HD issue, is this because...

It is cheaper ☐ 1(61)
I do not have a CD-ROM ☐ 2
I could not find the CD issue ☐ 3

39 On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1=no important and 10=very important), please rate the importance of the following features on cover CDs;

Games demos (playable)	(62)
Games demos (rolling)	(63)
Hot shots	(64)
Interactive previews	(65)
Interview video footage	(66)
Patches	(67)
Drivers	(68)
Utilities	(69)
Internet software	(70)

40 How would you rate the following sections of PC Zone on a scale of 1 to 10? (1: crap, 10: excellent)

Games Reviews	(71)
Blueprints (Previews)	(72)
Bulletin (News)	(73)
Features	(74)
Trouble-shooter (Tips)	(75)
Tech Zone	(76)
Budget Games	(77)
Cover Disc pages	(78)
Buyer's Guide	(79)
PC Zone On-Line	(80)
Cybertwats	(6)
Oil! What's your game?	(7)
Competitions	(8)
Comment	(9)
Looking Back	(10)

41 Which of the following magazines do you buy?

A Regularly/B Occasionally/C Never

	A	B	C
PC Format	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(11)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(13)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(15)
PC Review	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
PC Gamer	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
PC Home	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
CD-ROM Today	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Ultimate PC	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
PC Guide	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
PC Gaming World	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Escape	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
.Net	<input type="checkbox"/> o	<input type="checkbox"/> o	<input type="checkbox"/> o
Internet Today	<input type="checkbox"/> x	<input type="checkbox"/> x	<input type="checkbox"/> x
Net Gamer	<input type="checkbox"/> v	<input type="checkbox"/> v	<input type="checkbox"/> v
Maxim	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(12)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(14)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(16)
Esquire	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Loaded	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
FHM	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Arena	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
GQ	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

42 Is PC Zone better, the same, or worse in your opinion than the following mags?

PC Zone is... A Better than/B Same as/C Worse than

	A	B	C
PC Format	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(17)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(18)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(19)
PC Gaming World	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
PC Gamer	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Ultimate PC	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

43 How do you rate our CD-ROM cover disc in relation to other mags?

PC Zone is... A Better than/B Same as/C Worse than

	A	B	C
PC Format	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(20)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(21)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(22)
PC Gaming World	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
PC Gamer	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Ultimate PC	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

44 How do you rate our CD-ROM interface compared to the following?

PC Zone is... A Better than/B Same as/C Worse than

	A	B	C
PC Format	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(23)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(24)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(25)
PC Gaming World	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
PC Gamer	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Ultimate PC	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

45 When buying a computer games magazine, which of the following is most important to you?

(Tick one box only)

Content of magazine	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(26)
Content of cover disc	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Both, equally	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

About you

46 How old are you?

701	Under 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(27)
702	15-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
703	18-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
704	25-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
705	35-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
706	45-54	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
707	55-64	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
708	65 or over	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

47 Which of the following best describes your occupation?

601	Senior Managerial/ senior professional	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(28)
602	Managerial/professional	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
603	Executive	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
604	Clerical	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
605	Work from home/ self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
606	Manual	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
607	Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
608	Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
609	In full-time education	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
610	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> o

48 How much do you earn a year?

801	Under £10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(29)
802	£10,000-£14,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
803	£15,000-£19,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
804	£20,000-£24,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
805	£25,000-£29,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
806	£30,000-£39,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
807	£40,000 or over	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

49 What is your sex?

Male	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(30)
Female	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

50 Do you have children?

No	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(31)
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

51 Do you live...

With your parents	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(32)
With partner/family	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
With friends	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Alone	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

52 How many other people in your house use your PC?

None	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(33)
1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
More than 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

53 Where in the house is the PC?

Your room/bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(34)
Lounge	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Study	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Other room	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

54 What national newspapers do you buy?

Daily Mail	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(35)
Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Times	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Telegraph	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Mirror	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Express	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Independent	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Financial Times	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
Evening Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> o
Star	<input type="checkbox"/> x

55 Which of these do you currently drink at least once a week?

Beer	<input type="checkbox"/> 1(36)
Wine	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Spirits	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

Readers' survey competition

Thank you for your participation and time. In order to be entered into the FREE prize draw to win the PC please fill in your details below, and return your survey to our Freepost address by **21st November 1997**.

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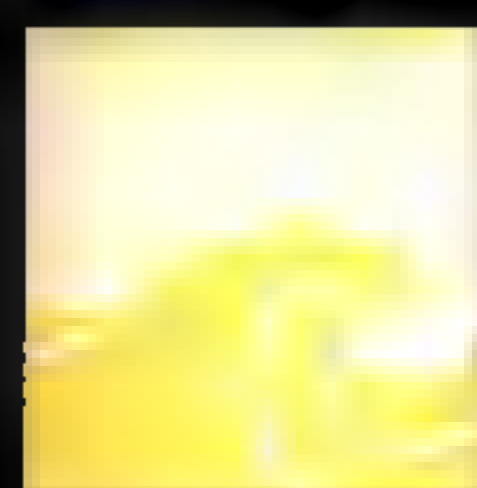


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TROUBLESHOOTER!



Ecstatica II - Walkthrough

After being deported from Twinsun for vagrancy, **Richie Shoemaker** finds himself saving the day yet again. Anything for a quiet life, he gets himself acquainted with the locals in *Ecstatica II*, who would sooner cut off his testicles than make conversation, and frankly who can blame them?



01 The Prison Tower

As everything is out to get you, your first priority is to find a weapon. From the stocks, turn left into the courtyard, go to the Craftsman's Guild and take the sword that is leaning against the blacksmith's tools. Now you are tooled up, trot along to the Guard's Tower and go straight up. You'll see treasure in a cage which you'll have to wait until later on to pick up. Near the top of the tower is a fatal spear trap. To trip it you must hit the head from the side. Now take the key and open the door. Take the stairs leading to the next tower, go past the inactive teleportation plate, and down the stairs to the bottom of the prison tower. Keep going, past the two gargoyles, until you get to a closed portcullis. Take the armour, which is floating, and make your way back to the prison tower. Take care, a gargoyle will attack you from behind. Now you can go up the stairs of the prison tower.

Go past the first locked door and up to the second. Smash it in and take the key from the chest. This will open the door below that will set the priestess free. At the very top of the tower is a staff to take the place of your weak sword. Now go to the very bottom of the tower and whack the two gargoyle heads. The portcullis should now open. Carrying on, if you go down the short flight of steps and turn left, you should see a gargoyle's head under the balcony. Hit it.



01



02

02 The Attic

Now go to the attic. You may have to go the long way round. Go through a door at the top left hand corner of the screen. It may be hard to see, but it is to the left of the closed portcullis. In the attic, find the blue switch (gargoyle head) and hit it. Near the spiral staircase, which leads out of the attic, there are three levers. Hit the blue one. This will activate a portcullis in the main corridor, through which you will find a blue key. Go back past the lever room and you will eventually find the blue door. Hit the green gargoyle head, go back and now throw the green lever. Another portcullis will open as you go past (near the blue door), inside which you will find the purple key. Now hit the gargoyle's head in the room with the purple door. It is now time to hit the red lever, and return to the blue-door room to hit the second gargoyle head. Two portcullises will open in that room, and a silver sword and some treasure lie behind one of them. Hitting the head here will open the thatched hut outside. Next, leave the attic and go down to the main courtyard near the well.





03

03 The Main Hall

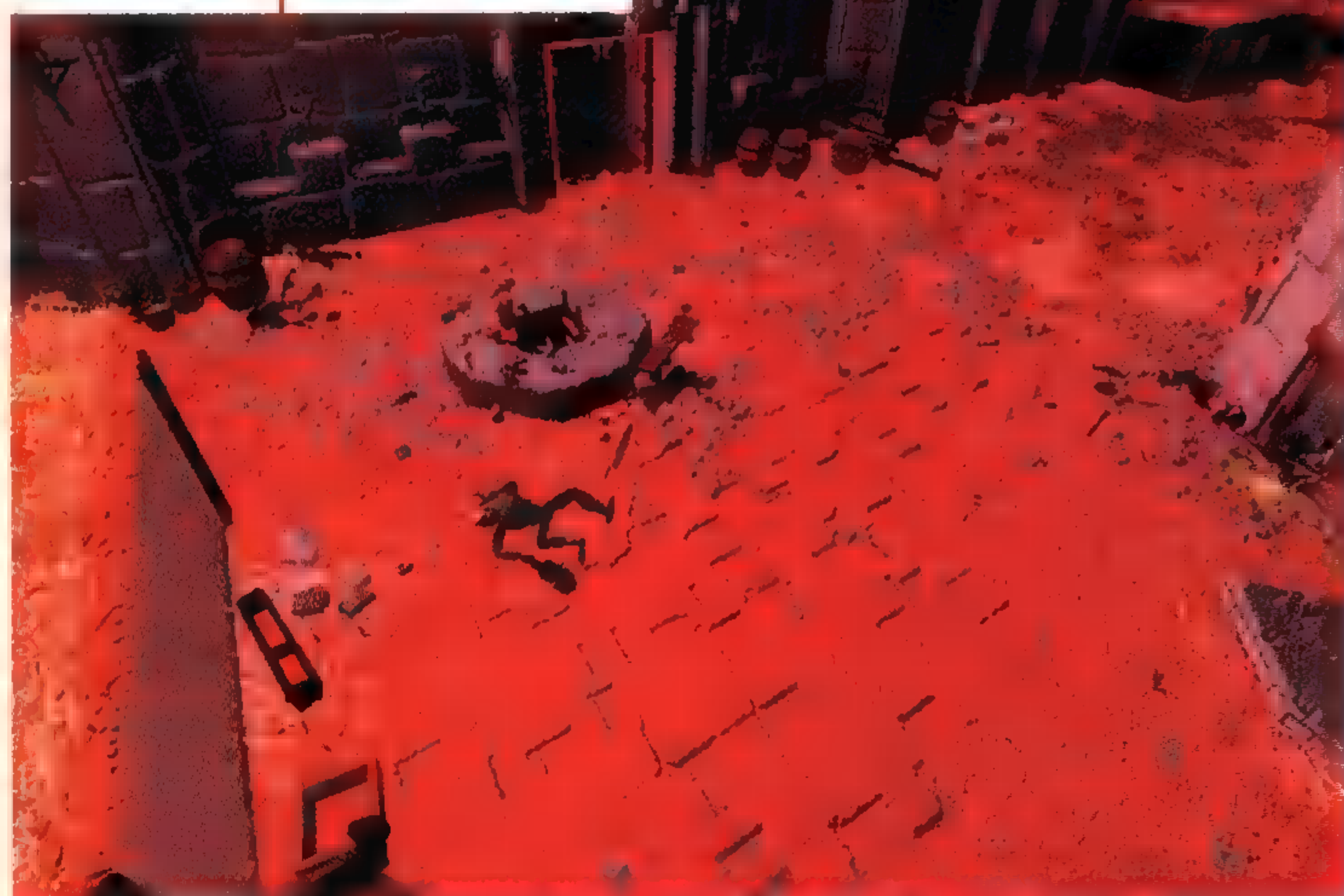
The double doors behind the well lead into the main hall. Give them a whack and walk in. There are bad guys around but if you search the ground floor you should find enough treasure and potions to keep you alive when you venture upstairs. When you go part way up either staircase, a shadow warrior will appear. Get up close and twat it. Go back down that staircase and up the other to kill the second warrior, on which he should drop the first fragment of the eldersign. Go up the staircase on the right, and at the top of the stairs walk straight on. Take the left doorway and run in to face the warlock. After you've killed him, retrace your steps and use the crystal ball. Go back down the stairs and exit the main hall.

04 The Monster in the Well

Next you must head for the stables. These are close to the guard tower on the right hand side of the courtyard. Go through the doorway on the left, where the horse is. Travel down the ladder, hit the gargoyle head and go through the portcullis. Turn right and go into the tunnels. You may have to search around but you'll eventually come across a drunken monster. Pick up the pink bottle (I picked up the wrong one first time) and leave the tunnel system via the way you came in, the stables. Go back to the well by the main hall and walk slowly towards the monster in the well. He'll snatch the bottle right out of your hand, but hang

around a bit and he'll disappear in a puff of smoke. Next, head down into the well (take the ladder, it's safest) and hit all three switches. A

02



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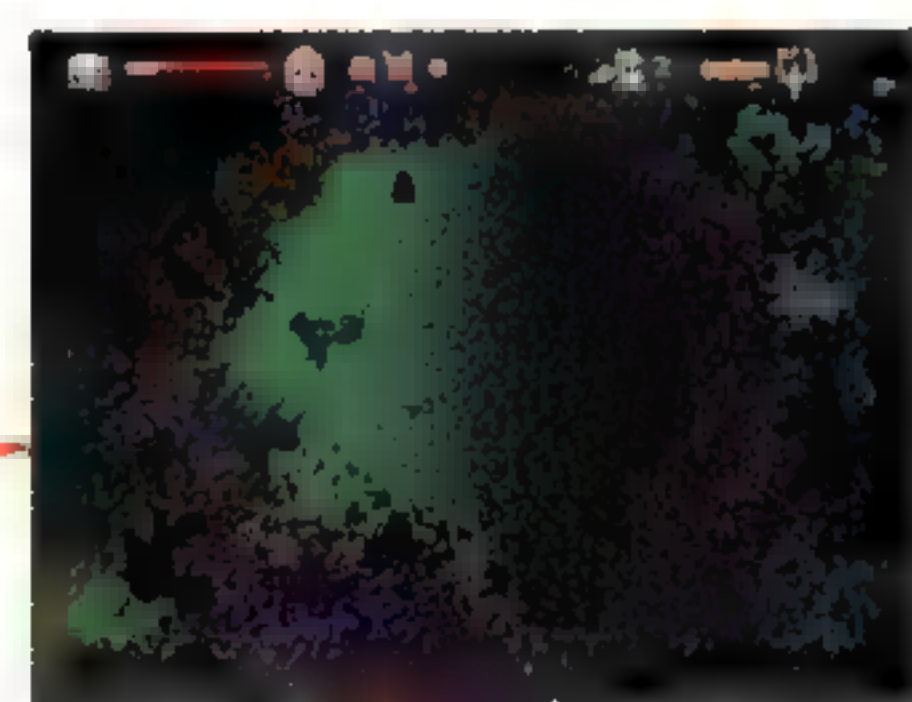
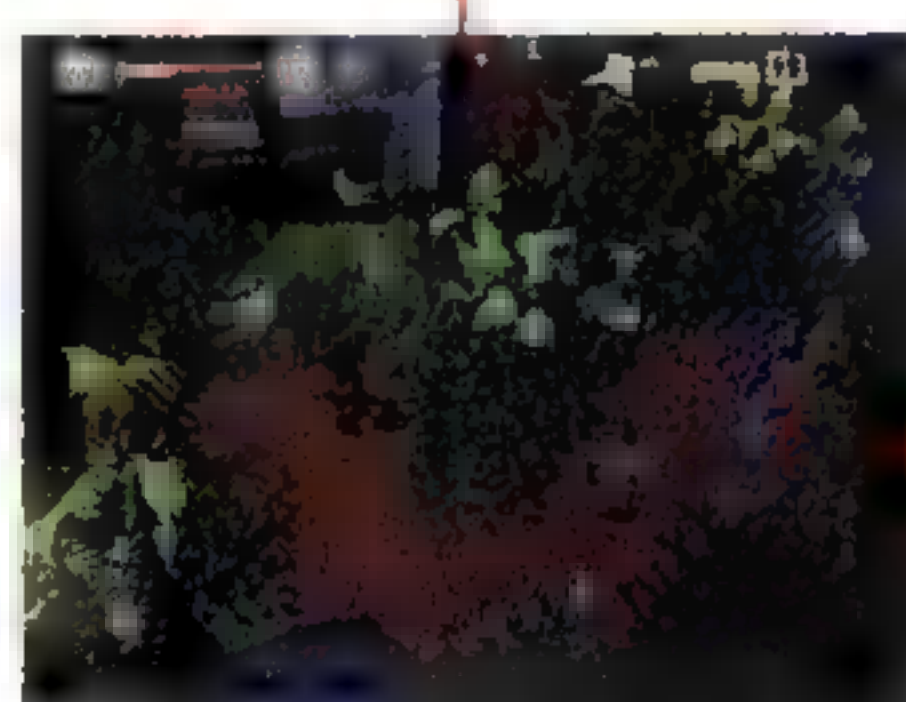


05

◀ large doorway will open. Go through, take the stuff you want and scamper back up the ladder into the main courtyard.

05 The Lost King's Tomb

Walk downwards from the well and take the door to the left of the horse. Go up the stairs and you'll find yourself on the second level of the craftsmen's guild. Locate the ladder leading upwards and climb it. Look around and not far away there should be a second ladder leading up to the roof. Climb up and take the stairs to the top of the chimney. Now fall into the chimney and you will be teleported. The stairs nearby lead up to the King's Tomb, but you will need to find three flashing skulls to place on the empty pedestals to gain entrance. The other two sets of stairs lead down into the catacombs where you will find the skulls. Remember you can only carry one skull at a time. While down there, look for the hidden gaps along the passageways. When you find one, leave the catacombs and up the stairs, walk up to one of the empty pedestals and the skull will appear on it. Once you have placed the second skull in the main part of the catacombs, go back down through the left entrance and take a left whenever possible, until you come across some downward stairs. Carry on through, walk slowly to the edge of the water until you see the flashing dots that form stepping stones, which will carry you to the other side. Go through the arch under the skull and turn right - you'll find the third and final flashing skull. Place it on the last pedestal and the main door will open. Go in and take the second piece of eldersiston. Next, take the red amulet from the skeleton on the throne (to allow you through red-spot doors). Take the smaller of the two crosses, for access to the graveyard. Go back to the room you first teleported to, use the crystal ball and open the red door. This will lead you back to the well.



06 The Graveyard

Back in the main courtyard, run downwards from the well and get yourself over the acid pool blocking the entrance. Hit



the gargoyle's head in that room, then leave and take the steps leading up to the left of the hospital tower. Past the red door is a meaty axe. Take that, then head back down. The main portcullis should now open, leading out to the drawbridge. Hit the level and go out of the castle grounds.

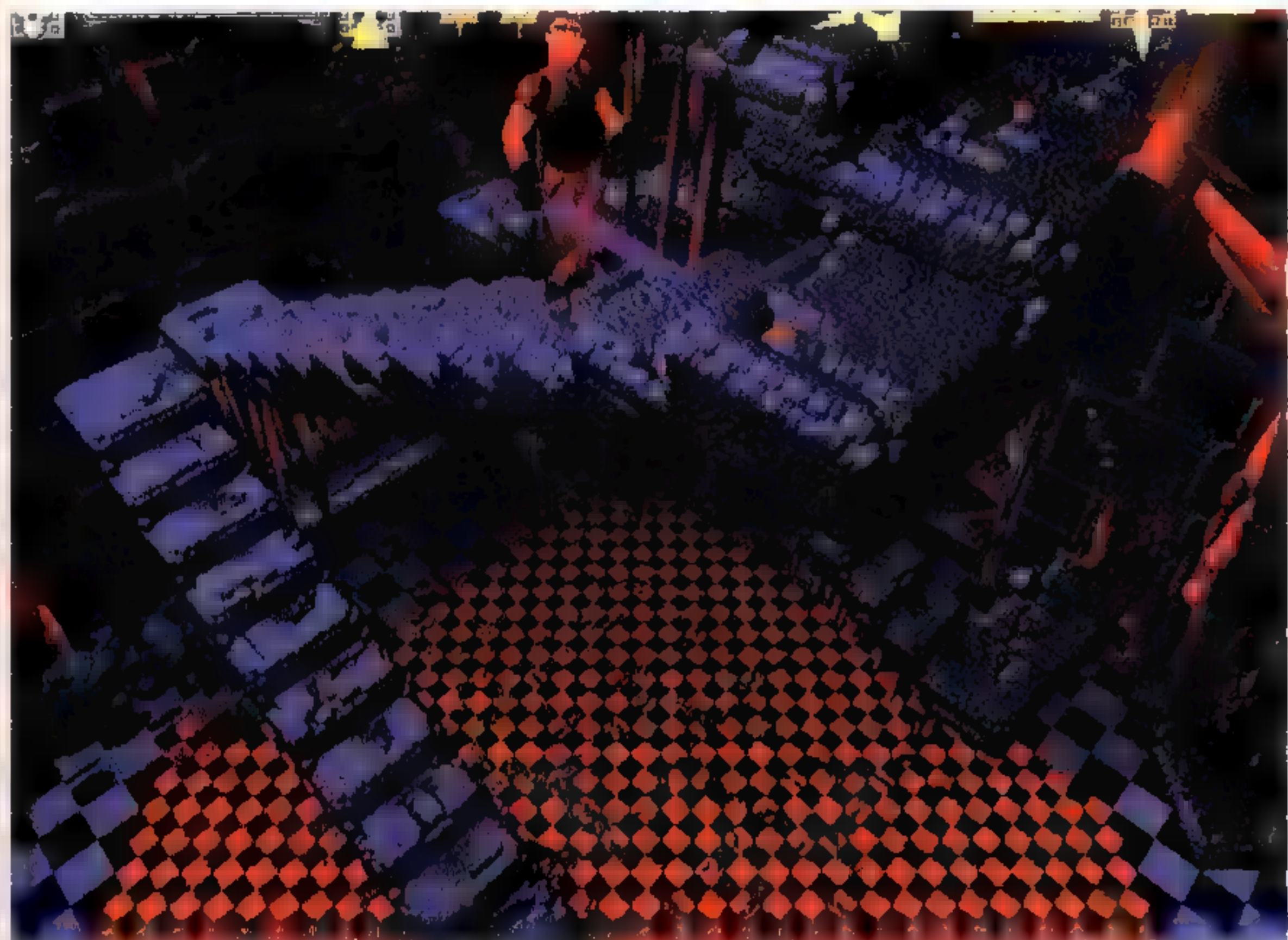
Go down one level, then left through some bushes. Straight on, you should find the graveyard. Follow the grounds round until you come across an underground entrance. Down there you'll find a room containing some spinning armour. Kill the chap that appears when you approach it and you'll automatically have it added to your inventory (press ENTER and CHECK). Go back into the graveyard and enter the church. Hit the candle at the end of the room and go down the stairs into an underground passage. This will take you into the middle of the forest.

07 The Sorcerer's Cave

Activate the crystal ball, then leave the screen and take the first right. Kill the plant and you should be able to take the next part of the eldersiston. Go back to the main path and take one of the right hand paths. (Don't carry on through the rock path just yet; it leads down through to the village and certain death!) Take a right after killing a purple-red flower. The path you need is hidden. Follow it and kill the blue flower. Once past it, take the right hand path and follow it round to a blue flower guarding a blue gem. When you've got the gem, go back and you should find a hidden path through the rocks on your right. Go through and take a right on the first and second fork. Take the next left to find a clearing.

Kill all the Amazon people and head to the cave in the top





08



left. Take the top exit, kill the Sorceress, get the ring, then go back out into the clearing and collect the next piece of the eldersign piece in the top right of the screen. Go back into the cave and activate the crystal ball, then teleport out. Now you can open the blue spotted doors and get a nifty sword from the treasure room at the top of the guard's tower.

08 The Wizard's Tower

Go to the right of the well and climb up the steps to the side of the guard's tower. Past the swinging axe you should find yourself on a ledge. Go to the door on the extreme left and into the room with the bombs. Run through and climb up the steps on the side of the tower. Watch out for the bombs on the stairs before you go through the blue door, and pass through the passage next to the blue door. Climb the steps until you reach the top of the tower, looking out for wall-zombies. Don't worry about the protected amulet; you have to kill the wizard first. Now go through the door in the upper left and you will reach the top of the tower via the teleporter. Walk down and kill the wizard when he shows up, then take the armour that appears. This will allow you to defeat the black monks in the village. Take the teleporter to go back down and take the now freed amulet. Go down one flight of stairs and find the exit to the side of the tower on the right of the screen. Go through the blue door and get the next piece of the eldersign. Walk down to the second last level of the tower and go outside through the doorway with the skull. Use the crystal ball and take the teleporter back to the forest and make a right, via the rock path to the village

Fighting talk

You'll soon find the best way of dealing with the different monsters. The 'left' attack followed by 'up' attack is pretty effective but you will have to fall back if you find yourself out-numbered. Use your magic staves sparingly because they're pretty useless after the magic is used up. (You may want to drop them before to bash down doors). With fire balls, your first shot may go wide, but follow through and they should find their target.

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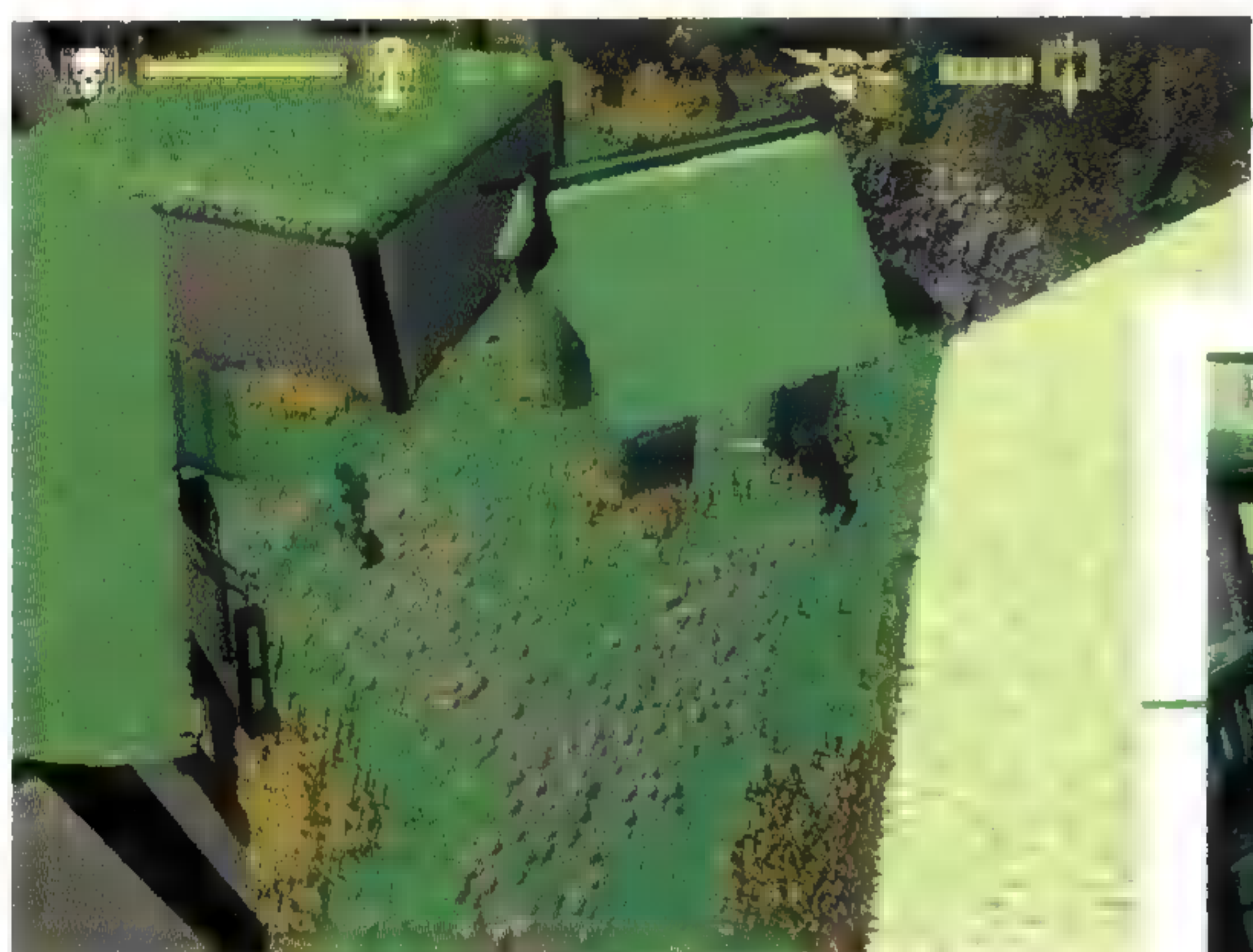
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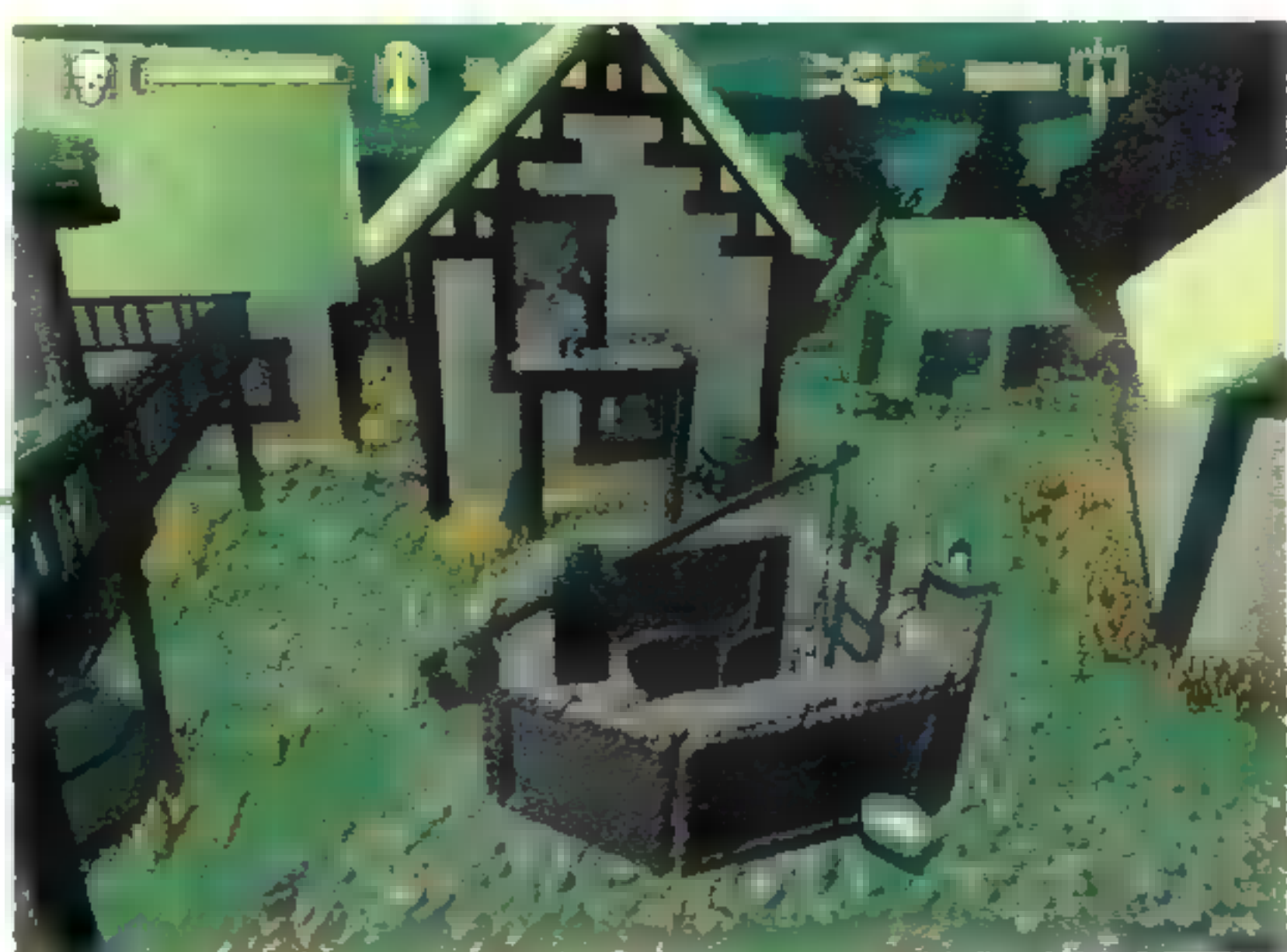
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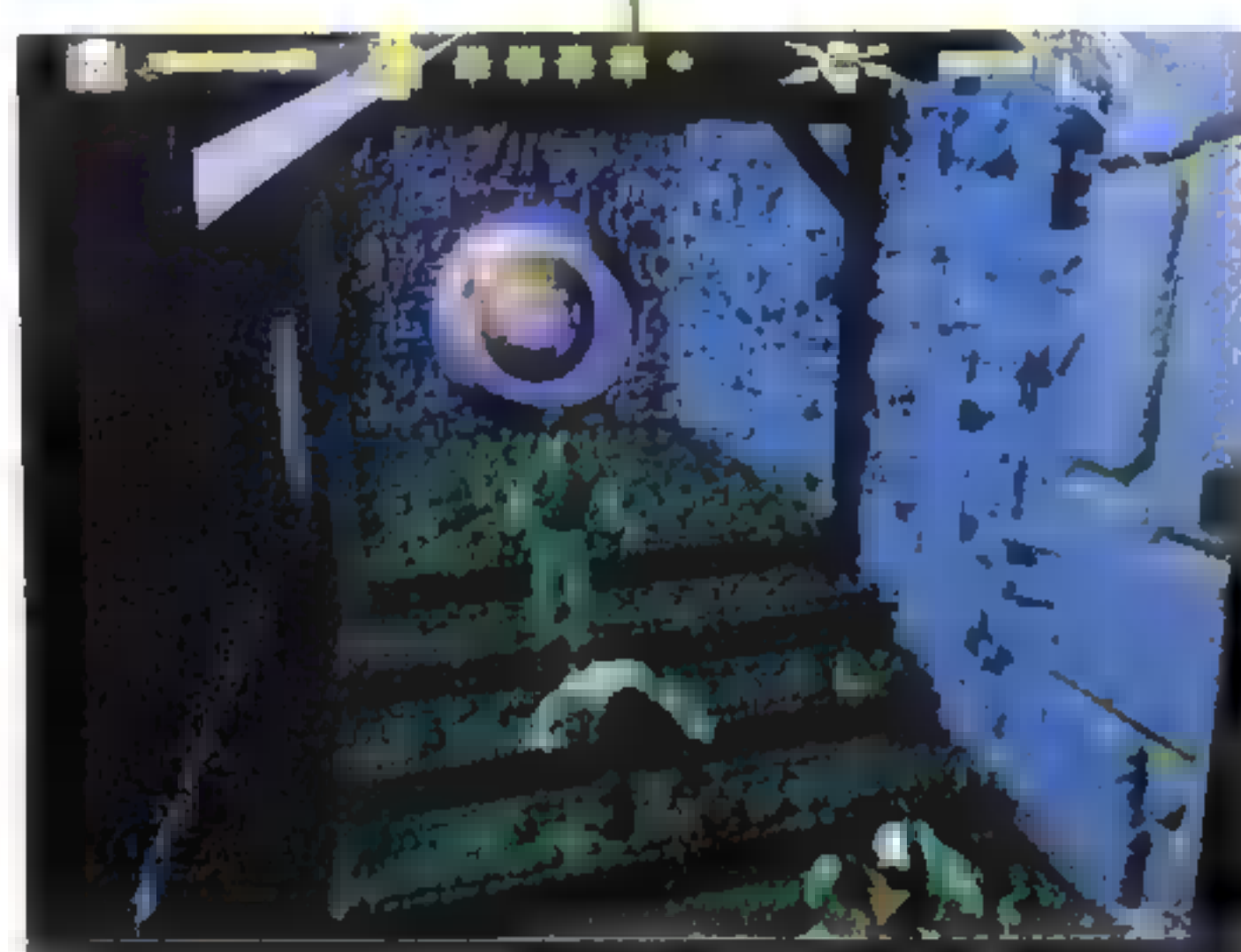
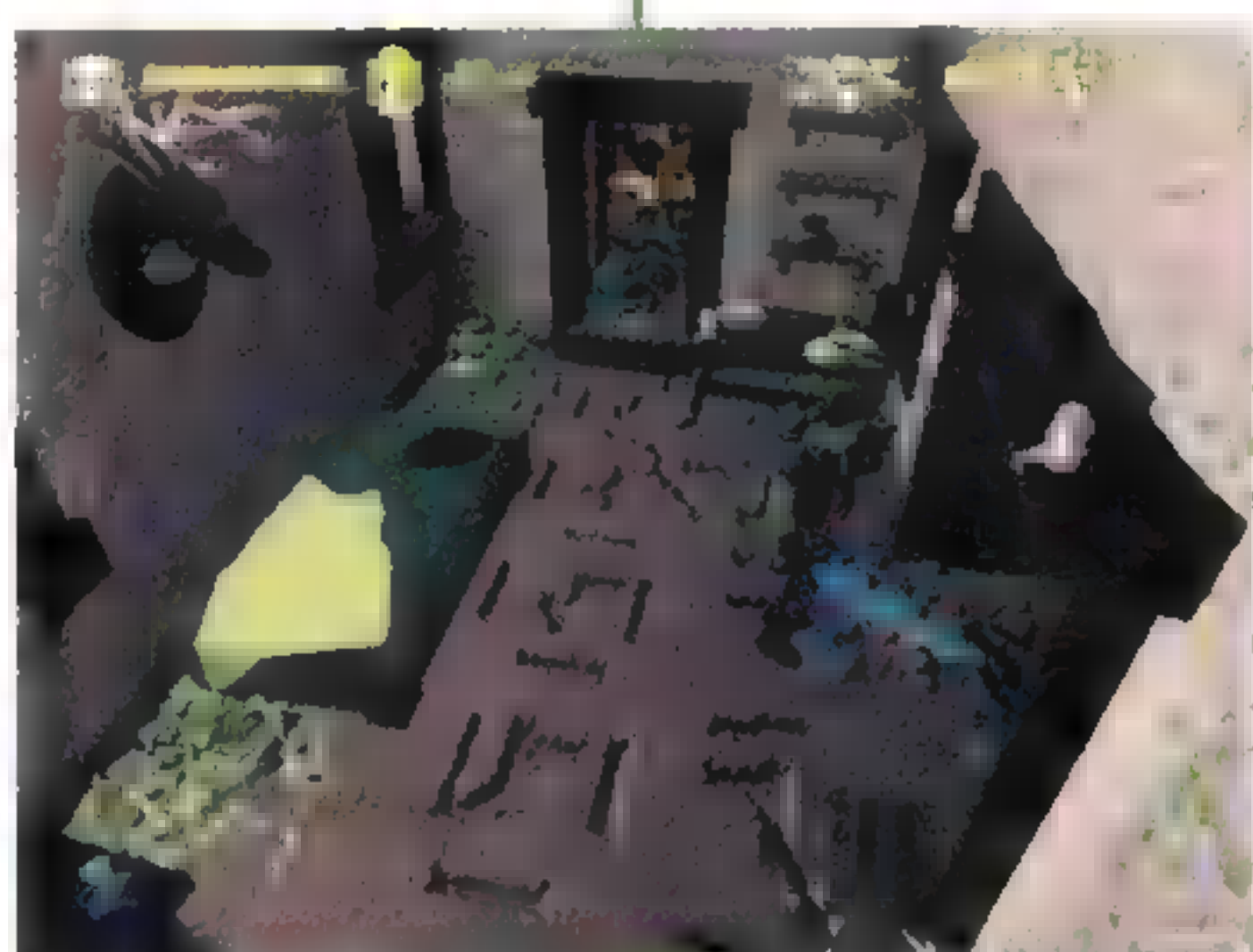
09



09 The Cursed Village

Find the well in the centre of the village and locate the house with the open ledge. To get in you will need to break down the blue door near the small hut that has four entrances. Take a running jump into the well. Go through the door and the cursed amulet will be destroyed. Climb out of the well and onto the abandoned temple down from the well, where you must activate the crystal ball.

If you look carefully at the villagers, they will point you in the direction of the hunter's lodge. Find the room with the stuffed bear. Hit the bear's paw and go into the opposite building. Take the lantern from the fireplace. Now go back to the village and find the pond. Go past it and into the forest. Find the old ruin and go through the red teleporter. Follow the corridor through and you come out on the mountainside. Jump up to the doorway visible in the top left and go through to the blue teleporter.



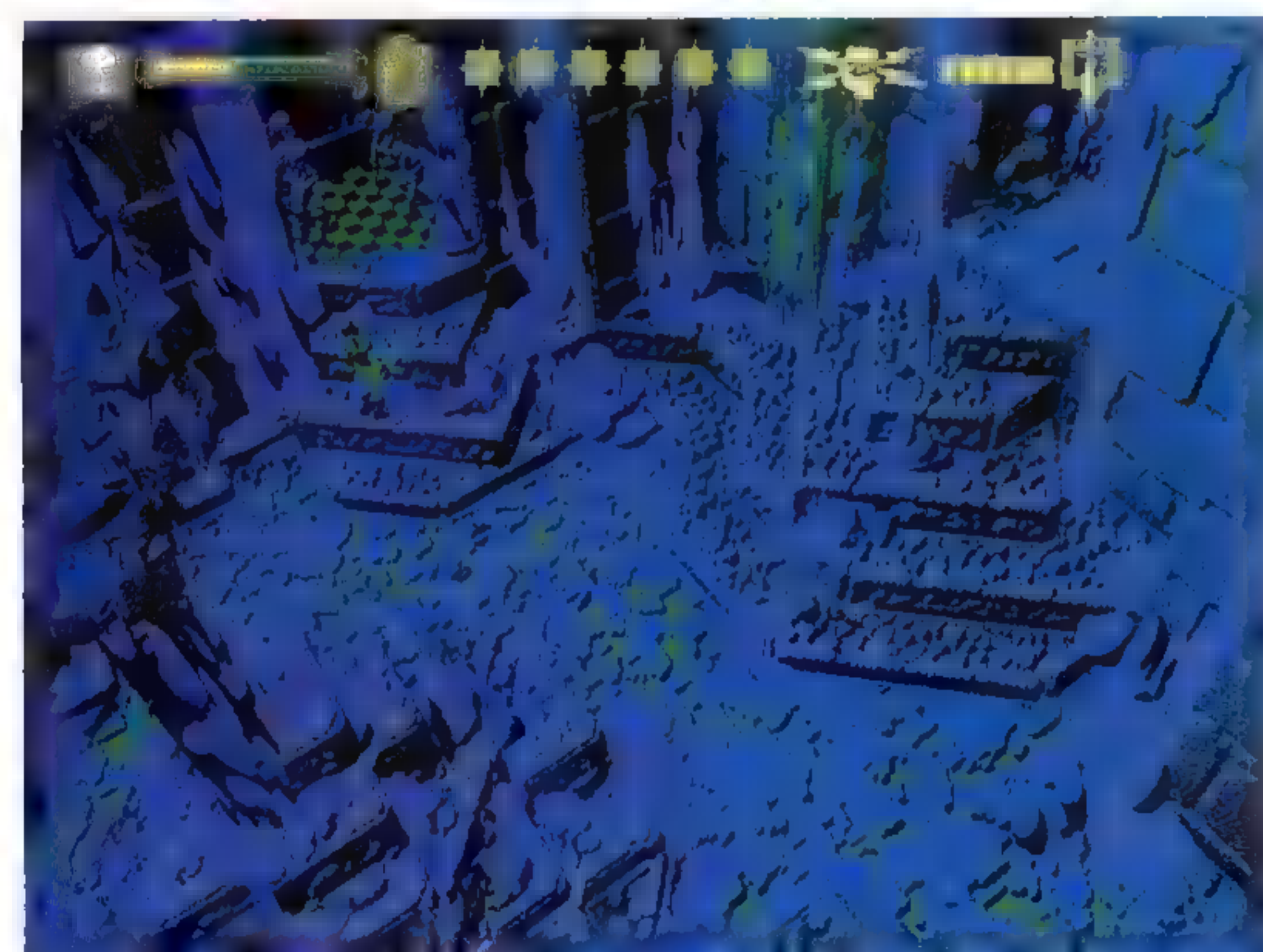
10 The Necromancer's Domain

Take the trail up, and up again, past the inactive crystal ball. Ignore the gem in the Necromancer's room - first you must kill him. Get the sixth piece of the eldersign, then activate the crystal ball you passed by earlier. Next, enter the checkerboard teleporter to the dark tower.

11 The Dark Tower

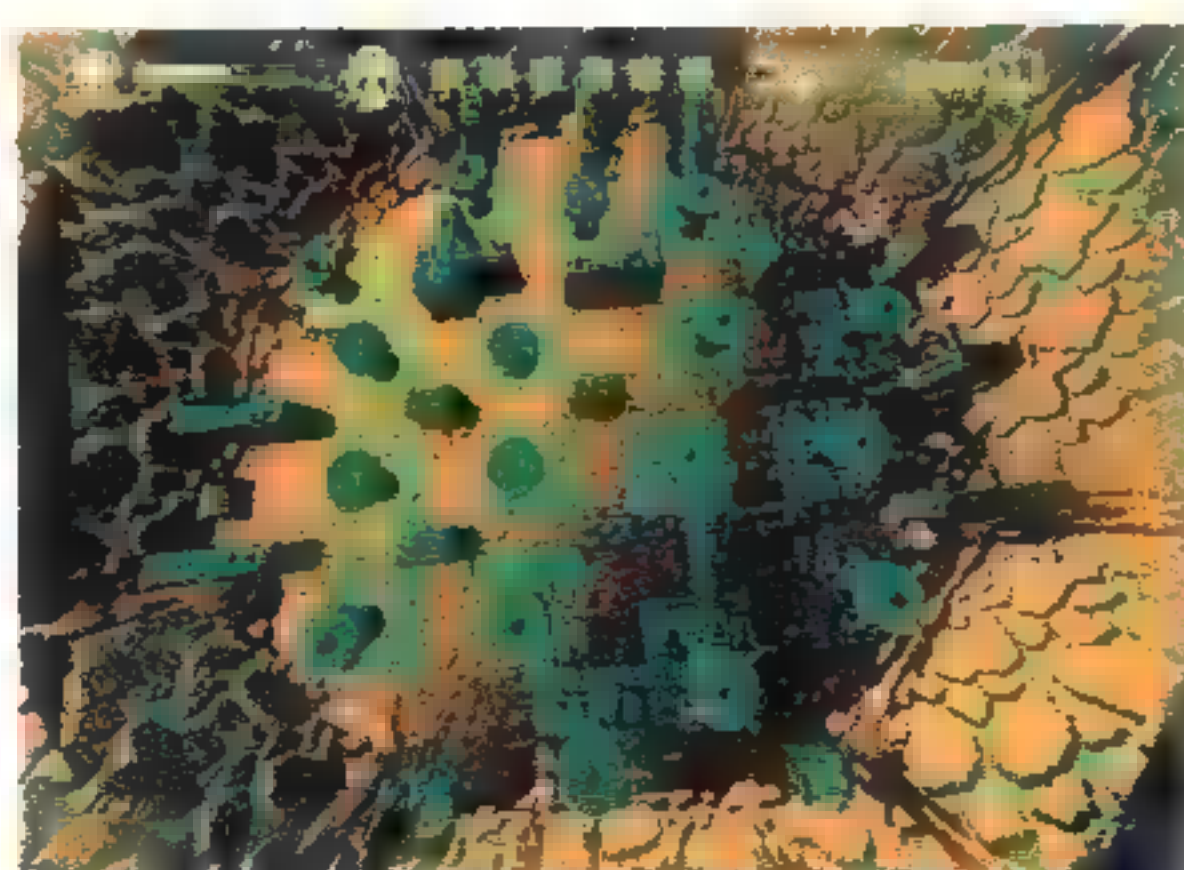
Here, time is of the essence. The six mazes are all pretty simple once you get the hang of them, so save often and keep a track of the timer in your inventory.

In the first maze, the key is in the chest on the right side of the screen. In the second, try the chest on the lower left-hand side of the screen. The third maze has a couple of invisible teleporters but it's easy to get the hang of. In puzzle four, go right, through the doors and past the teleporter. In the bottom part, head left and open the



10

11



And remember folks

1 Save the game often, especially when climbing narrow staircases and before getting into scraps. You can easily fall to your death if a creature hits you and you reel back over the battlements. Also save before climbing into teleporters. If need be you could always create a second directory and copy the savegames to it.

2 Some creatures will leave phials for you to pick up and drink from. The yellow ones are good for your health and purple are bad. Beware the red phials, they could have a nasty surprise. Further into the game, creatures will leave behind magic scrolls that will boost your magic levels.

3 You can jump over the acid puddles but some of them are difficult, and one or two are bound to zap a lot of your strength. There is a pair of boots above the stable building should you need them.

4 If you get lost in the catacombs or the forest, look carefully for another route. Many of the paths are hidden and the terrain may need a second look - look at the movements of the bad guys, they may give you a clue.

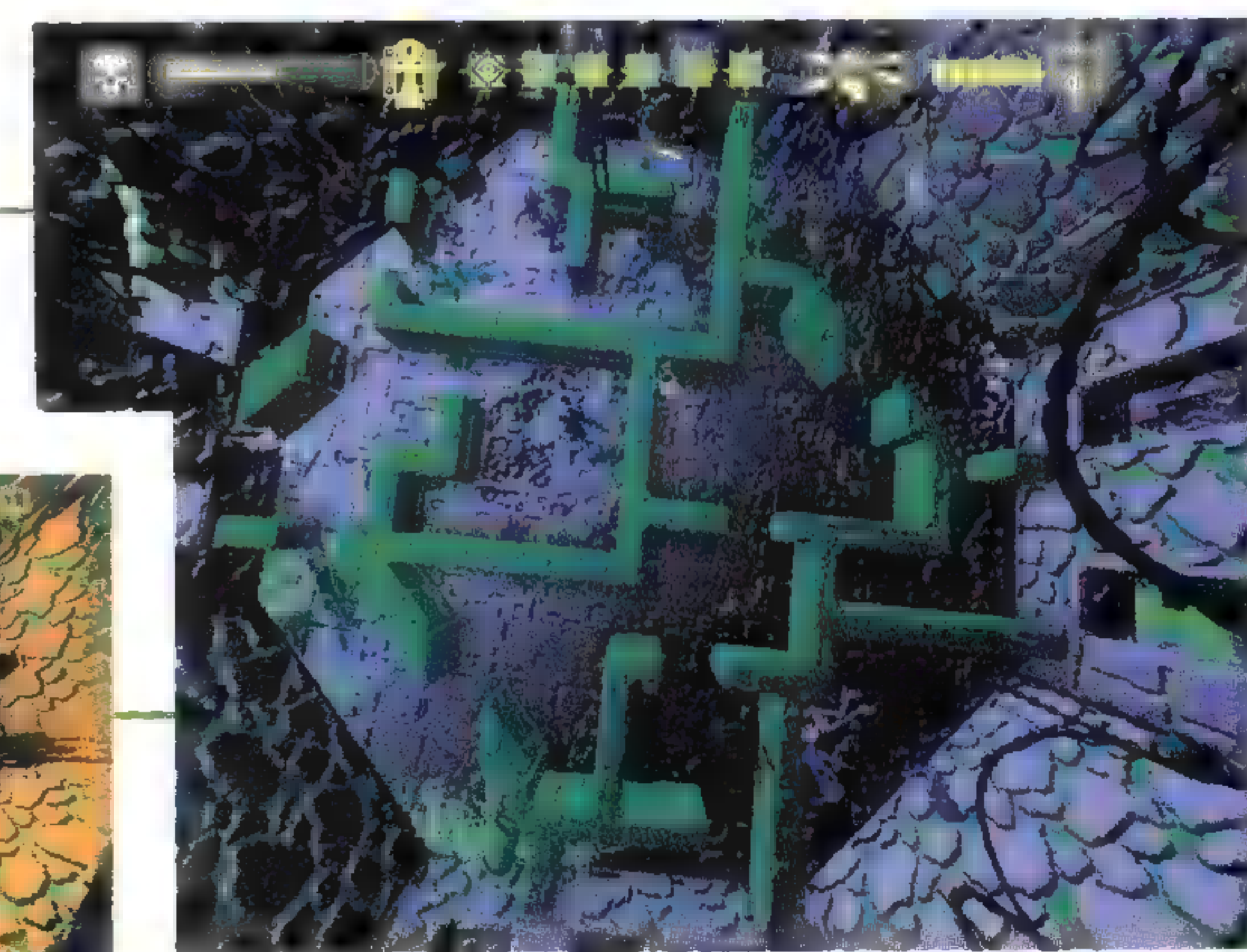
5 If you can't progress to another part of the map, there is almost certainly a special item missing from your inventory.

6 Have your map ready (sorry pirates!).

treasure chest. Go for the bottom right and on to the chest in the upper right area. After you've done that, go to the central area, and from there move up to the upper left and on to the central teleporter. On level five open the middle chest at the bottom, then up to the top and take the key from the chest.

Remember on puzzle six to take the left-hand teleporter to the top. Then take the bottom teleporter to the left side, and walk to the right where a hidden teleporter will whisk you away. Now walk to the left, and you'll hit the second hidden teleporter. Move left and take the teleporter to the top of the screen. Now walk to the glowing balls and out.

Follow the hallway and you'll find the last piece of the eldersign in the left chest through the right door. Make your exit from the room and roll through the top door. Get past the hammers to the bottom, take the shoes and go back to the left hammer, where you should discover the scroll. Move quickly now and take the left hallway, then the top one. Follow this round to a right doorway, ignore the chest, move up and take the gold key. Then it's back to the forcefield, pass and prepare for the final battle with the Archmage. Good luck. Z



**IF YOU WANT
THE ULTIMATE
ADVENTURE GAME
AND YOU DON'T
OWN A CONSOLE,**

HERE'S SOME CONSOLATION . . .

PC ZONE

Welcome to the *PC Zone* Recommended section. Here you'll find the cream of the games we've painstakingly reviewed and picked out over the years, plus those we feel should go down in PC gaming history as all-time Classics.



IN AN EFFORT TO KEEP IT simple, we've split it up into genres: Action games, Sports simulations, Adventure games, Flight simulations, Driving games, Role-playing games and Strategy games.

The top ten games of each genre are then listed, with a brief summary of the game, review score, publisher and contact number. Most of the games listed here were awarded *PC Zone* Classic status (90 per cent and above), and some managed a *PC Zone* Recommended award (80 per cent and above) at the time that they were reviewed. To achieve the highest accolade, a game must not only be very playable, entertaining and offer long-term appeal,

but it must also be original and/or bring something new and worthwhile to the genre. To this end, we've included some sequels, and although these show a lower score than the original title, they are deemed better (they didn't get a higher score 'cos the game had already been done, so the sequels weren't exactly bursting with originality – okay?), so this guide isn't a list of the highest scoring games ever reviewed by *PC Zone*, but a guide to the best games currently available.

When you're reading the reviews in the rest of the magazine, please remember to bear this section in mind. The highest scoring game is supposed to represent a benchmark in a particular genre, and we will always be comparing new games with this, in accordance with the above criteria. If you use this section along with the 'In Perspective' guide that now accompanies every review, you should be able to gauge pretty accurately whether a game is worth buying, whatever your personal preference and taste. As a result,

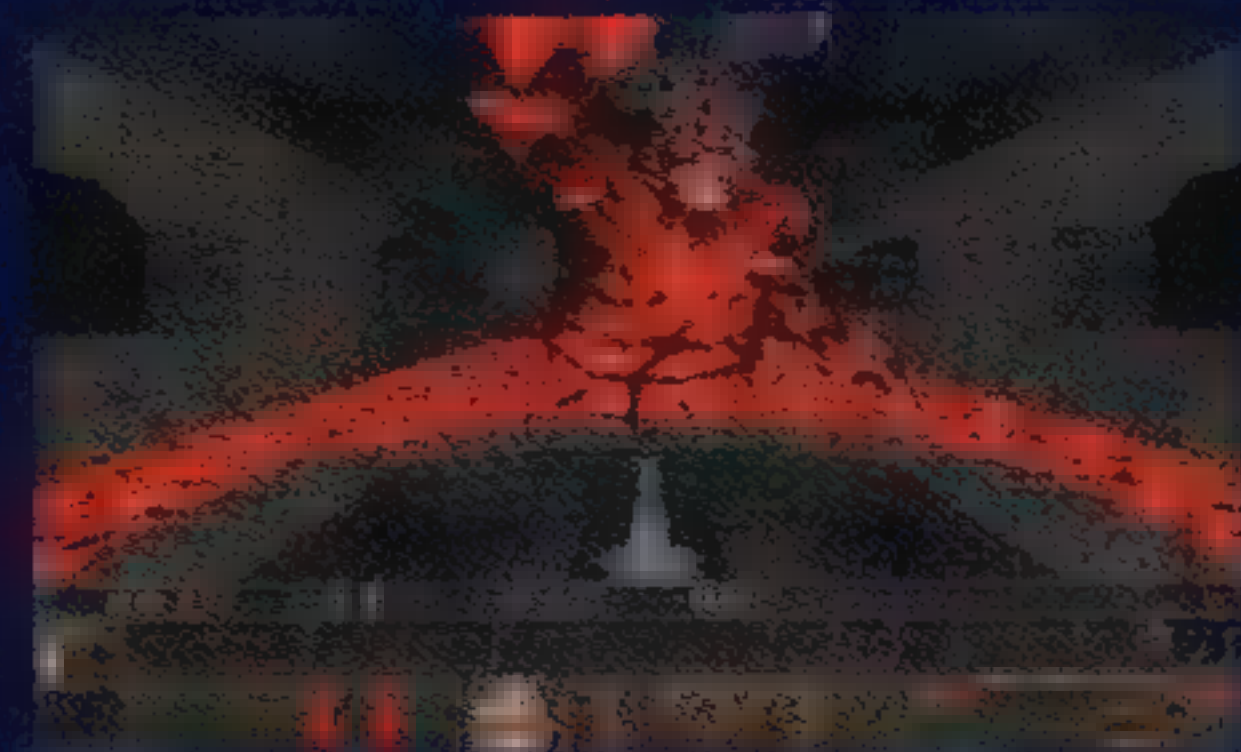
you will see games dropping out of this section as new and better titles are released, so keep your eyes peeled for new entries in each of the genres.



Jeremy Wells, Editor

Recommended

Action



QUAKE (96)

The seminal 3D shoot 'em up and quite possibly the most important PC game ever released. Very atmospheric when played as a first-person game and untouchable when played over a network. Despite the fact that it's now pretty aged, it's still the office favourite. Definitely 'pour hommes'!

Publisher:

GT Interactive (0111 258 3791)

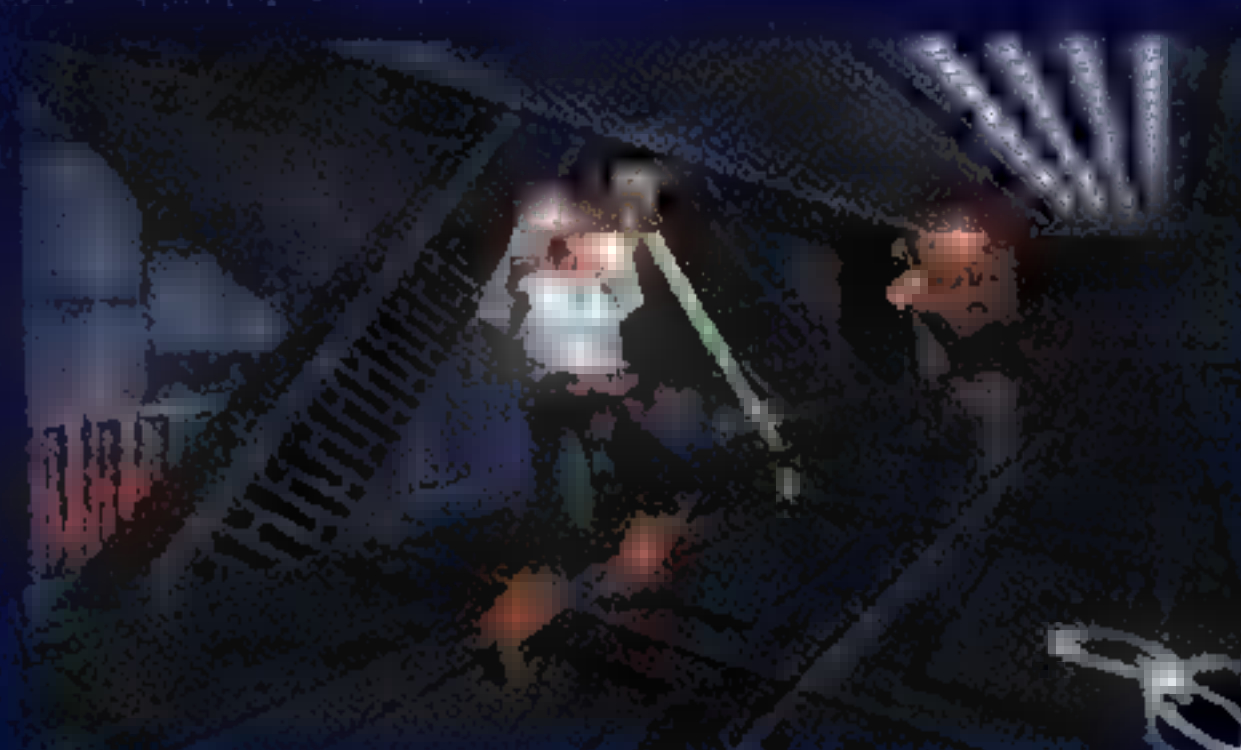


TOMB RAIDER (94)

The first game to take the *Age of Mankind* principles and apply them in a new, in-your-face way. The play area is vast, the puzzles are clever and it's endlessly playable thanks to a revolutionary control system. If you have a 3Dfx card, you're in for a treat.

Publisher:

Core/Eidos (0181 780 2222)



JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES II (94)

It's not *Quake*, but it doesn't even try to be. But it is a competing, technically superb blend of action and exploration wrapped up in the Star Wars universe. Absolutely most impressive.

Publisher:

LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)

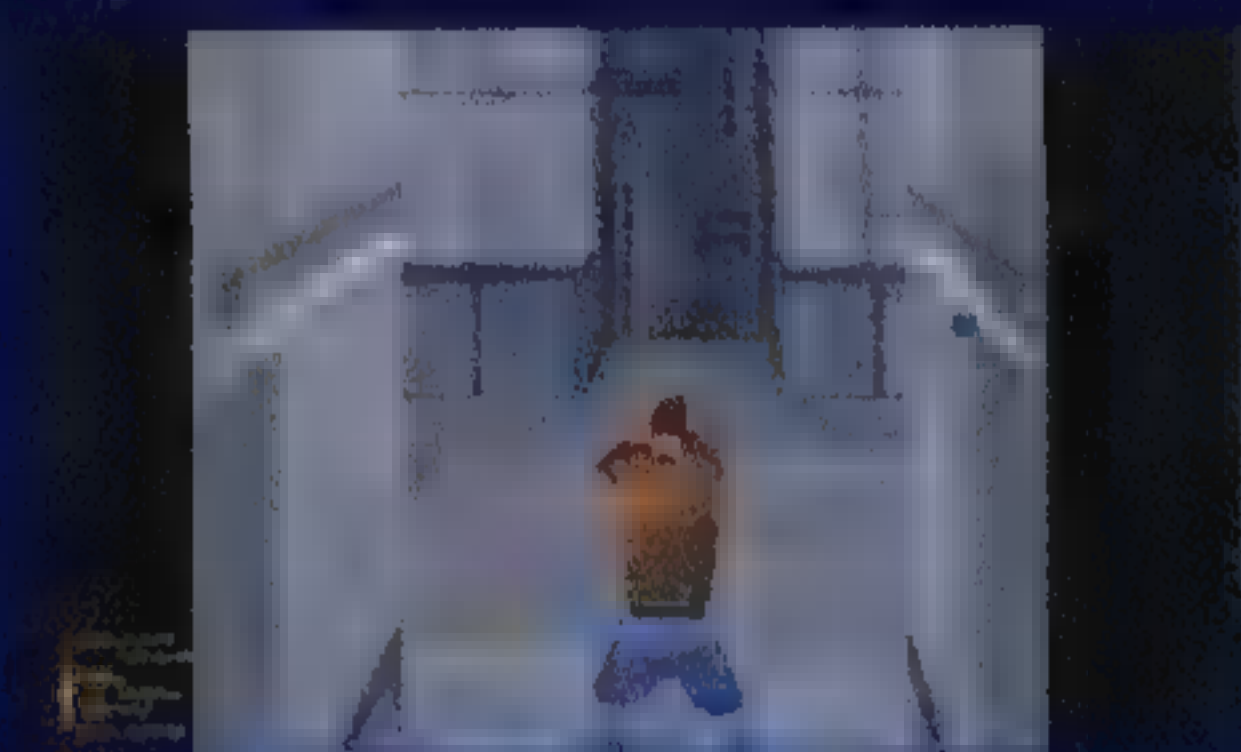


HEXEN II (94)

The long-awaited, hot-blooded sequel sweeps into action with its trusty sword, looking to carve a big 'H' on the chest of its star rival, *Quake*. This is a first-person shooter 'em off with balls as well as a big magnet.

Publisher:

Activision (01895 456700)

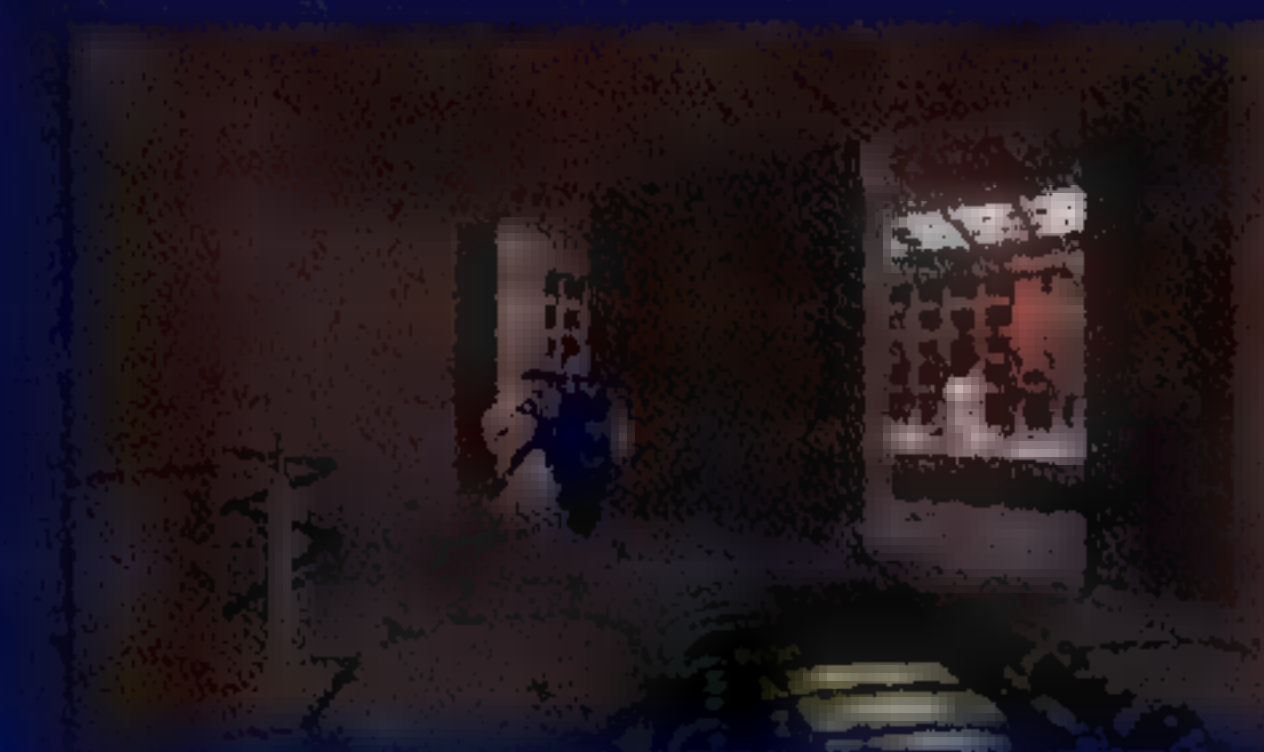


FADE TO BLACK (94)

The unofficial sequel to the excellent *Blackback*, this is a near-perfect blend of first-person exploration and combat action. The technical precursor to the fantastic *Tomb Raider*, it's a classic in its own right.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)

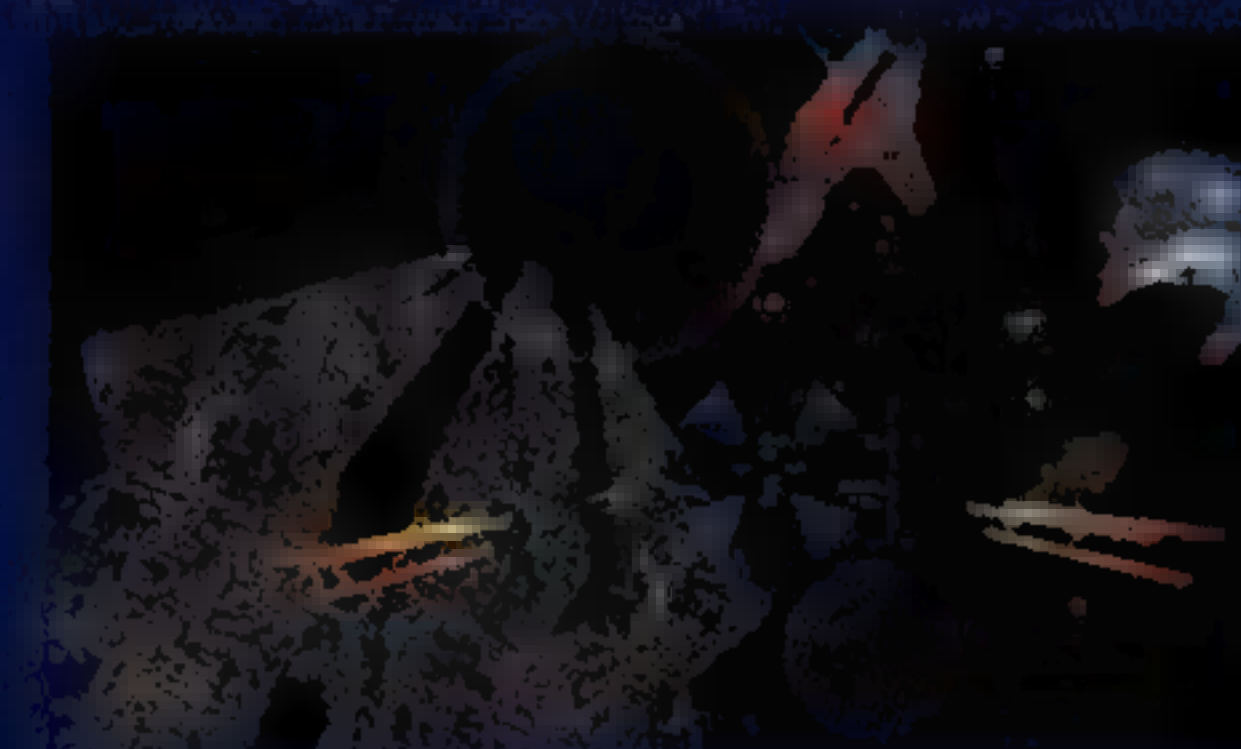


DUKE NUKEM 3D (93)

The debate rages on, and there are still an awful lot of people who rate *Duke* over *Quake*. It's not as technically impressive, but brings gameplay by the bucketload in one player mode and when played over a network.

Publisher:

Eidos Interactive (0181 780 2222)

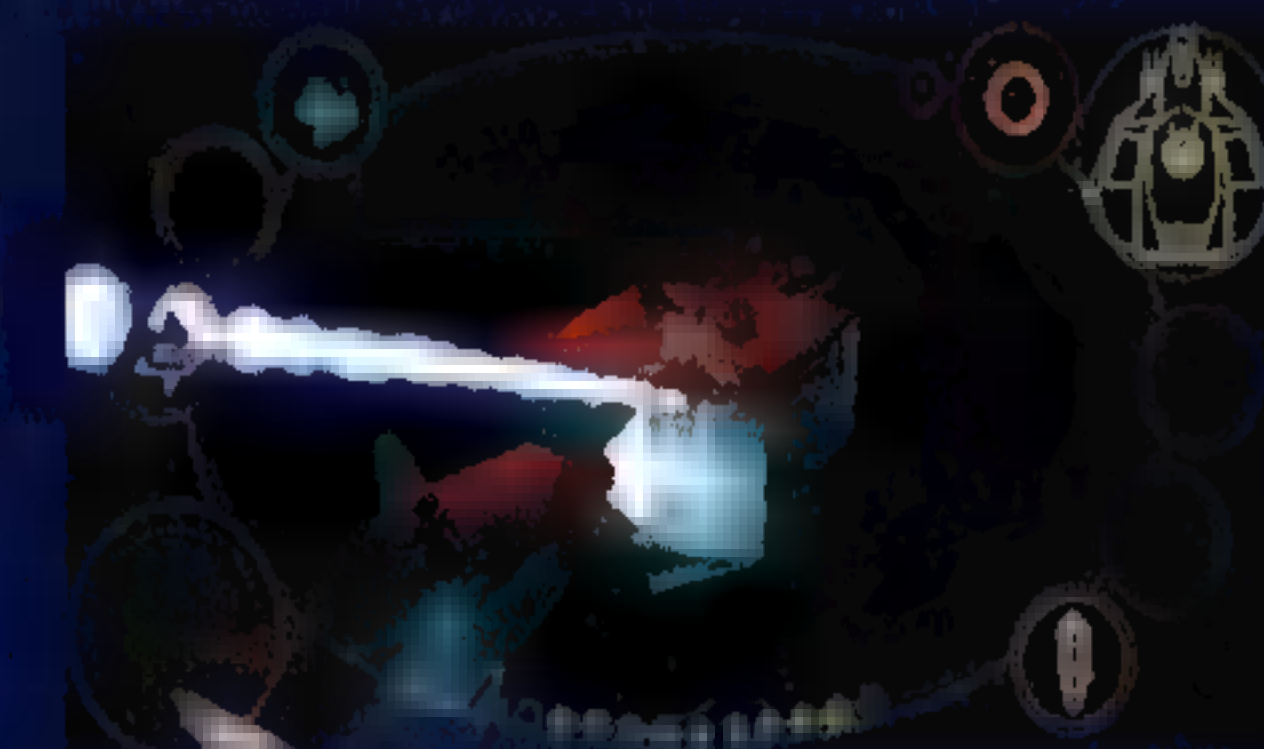


PRIVATEER 2: THE DARKENING (94)

The ultimate mix of space combat, *Elite*-style trading and *Star Wars* action, *Privateer 2* was the first big budget release from Origin to use the action in a positive way. Backed with stars, this is pure stuff.

Publisher:

Origin/Eidos (01753 549442)

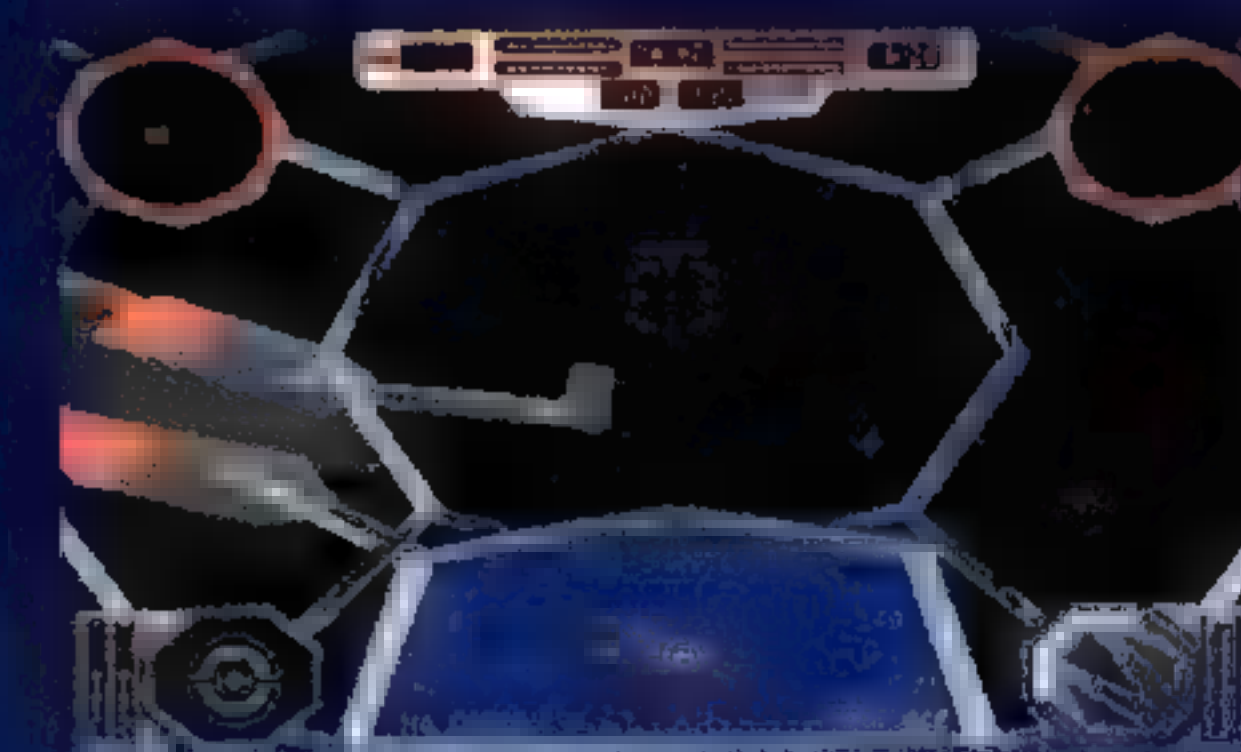


DARKLIGHT CONFLICT (92)

It might not have a mega budget cast or a film budget, but *Darklight* knocks spots off just about every other space combat sim there is. It looks utterly fantastic and the 3D engine is superb and very fast.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



TIE FIGHTER (94)

Still rated by many as the finest space combat sim ever released, it successfully brings all the *Rings of Star Wars* with a wicked new engine for super-fast *TIE* on *X-Wing* fish-offs.

Publisher:

LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)



MAGIC CARPET 2 (92)

The original wooed us with its speed and smoothness – this is even better, with new night-time bits, miniters and a very useful online help system. Technically speaking, the game only has to be bettered.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



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Driving



CARMAGEDDON (95)

Aren't you a little bit of a racer that's heavy on the hit 'n' run and generally loads of different cars to choose from, plenty of tracks, three ways to play and a lot of multi-player options make this one of the most entertaining driving games ever.

Publisher:
SCI (0121 585 3308)



NASCAR RACING 2 (94)

A worthy upgrade of the original game, featuring a new, smoother 3D engine, more competitive cars, improved graphics, a single-player career car selection and a multi-player network option. With the constant stream of head-butt crashes to and from, this is a racing sim fan must.

Publisher:
Gene (0178 920 9100)



NETWORK Q RACE RALLY (94)

The ultimate rally race from Euro-press is the ultimate in dirty, sticky action. 27 different stages, hundreds of cars, a fantastic night-way network system and varied terrain and conditions make this superior to the limited Turbo Rally. Go buy it!

Publisher:
Euro-press Software (01625 859444)



INDYCAR 2 (90)

If you don't mind going round and round in circles, but still have that unbelievable desire, this is the only real alternative to F1/95. Technically more demanding, though a little sluggish on anything but a high-end machine in VGA mode.

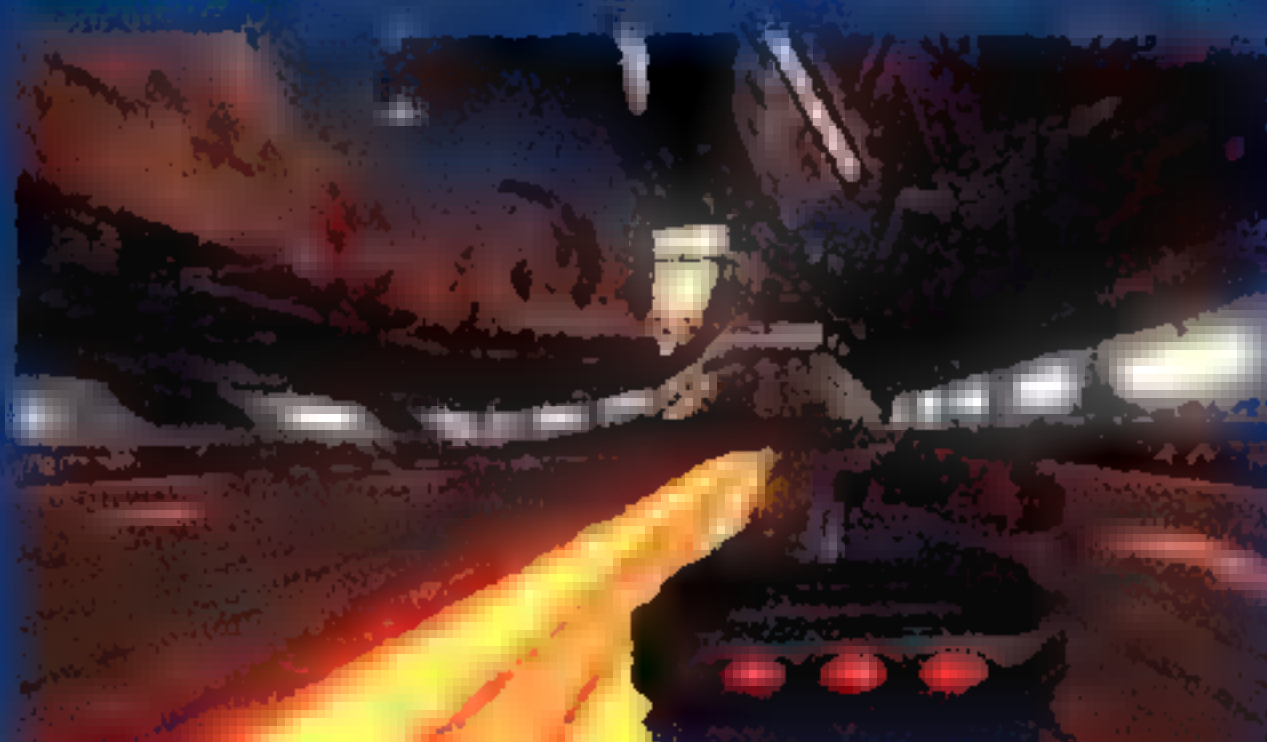
Publisher:
Gene (0118 920 9100)



SCREAMER 2 (93)

Whether the first game earned its hat in the classic road race, this game is like a rally in just about every way but name - except that it's better in every way. Like TNFS, it's very much an amateur which makes it ideal for a quick fix.

Publisher:
VIE (0111 44 2255)



POD (90)

One of the first racing games to require Juke, Internet and MIM. The graphics are awesome understatements of the game and with new cars, tracks and power up, promised to be joined by Juke on the Internet, you'll never get bored.

Publisher:
Ubi Soft (0181 944 9000)



MICRO MACHINES 2 (93)

The classic classic, converted to the PC as new tracks provide a new challenge. The new track editor system means no more frustration for the uninitiated. This version comes with a track editor.

Publisher:
Codemasters (01200 444444)



THE NEED FOR SPEED (89)

Exciting arcade racing action at its best, with a great selection of cars and open tracks. Suicidal oncoming traffic and angry cops demand TNFS first within the arcade game list.

Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 2 (94)

The ultimate upgrade to the original F1 driving game ever. Updated for the 94/95 season with all new detailed graphics, cars and teams. Must be run on a Pentium to run the full mode - but it's still great.

Publisher:
MicroProse (0118 258193)



DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 (84)

Exciting arcade racing action at its best, with a great selection of cars and open tracks. Suicidal oncoming traffic and angry cops demand TNFS first within the arcade game list.

Publisher:
Psygnosis (0118 282 3000)

Sports



LINKS LS (94)

The classic golf sim gets an update and upgrade in its 3D. There's more options, luscious graphics, a redesigned menu and a view selection system. There's even a built-in upgrade for all the old data disk owners you won't want to miss.

Publisher:
Eidos Interactive (0118 780 2222)



VIRTUAL POOL (91)

No billiard-loving pool aficionado should miss out on this simple but very playable sim with an ingenious moving-ball system and an impressive physics. The player games are too, but on the the two-player games and network links, which are even better.

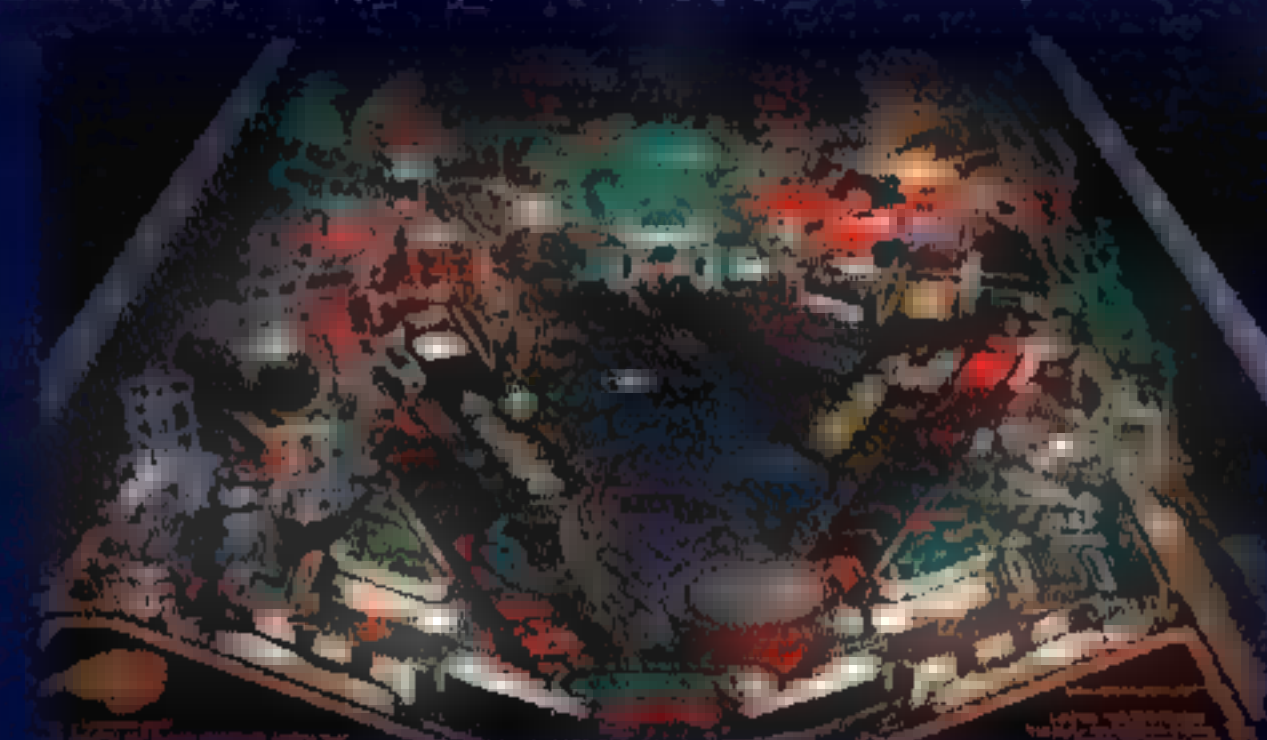
Publisher:
Interplay (011 22 423666)



PGA TOUR PRO (94)

Okay, so there's nothing that really distinguishes this version from the last, except that it's for the brilliant and very easy to use Internet play facility. Waste no time, go and thwack some Americans now. Your country needs you.

Publisher:
EA Sports (01753 549442)



PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK! (91)

Remember PP: The W? Well, this is the second table in the series, and it's better in every way. The ball dynamics and detail have been improved as have the sound effects. Plus the world's dirtiest computer game returns to "Look, those lights!"

Publisher:
Eidos Interactive (0181 343 7337)



ACTUA SOCCER (92)

Still the best soccer game on the PC, thanks to a super 3D polygonal engine and more captured players. Since paper games might be frustrating, but in two-player mode it excels, and Barry Davies provides some knockout commentary.

Publisher:
Gremlin Interactive (01142 753423)



NHL HOCKEY 97 (90)

Visually slick and very playable, this 'all-new' updated NHL game features some graphical tweaks and a smoother, faster engine. There's a handful of national sides thrown in, as well as the most recently completed season's statistics and teams.

Publisher:
EA Sports (01753 549442)



NBA LIVE 97 (92)

Much better than the previous version (which lacked drive), this offering is well put together. With excellent graphics, sound effects and a hip soundtrack, inevitably it plays as good as it looks.

Publisher:
EA Sports (01753 549442)



MADDEN NFL 97 (87)

This PC incarnation is well up to the quality seen on the console version, with all the features and slick presentation we associate with standard EA sports releases. The best American football game on the PC.

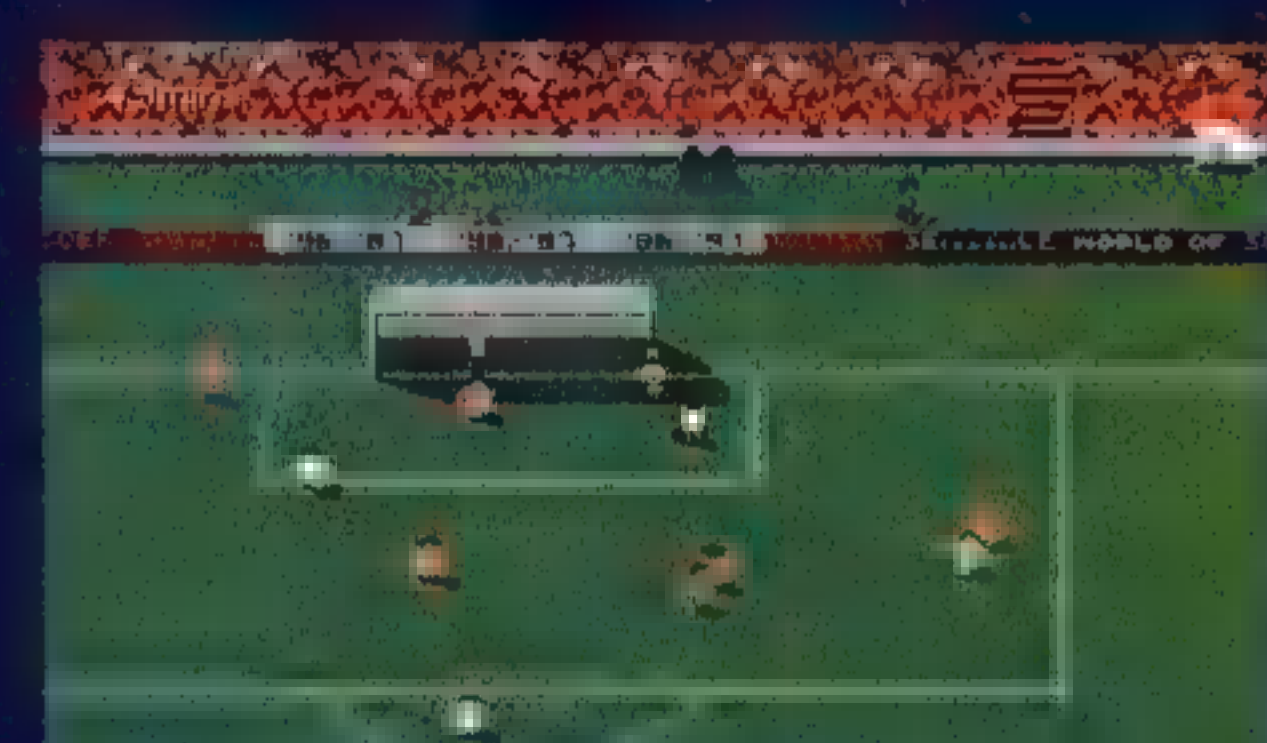
Publisher:
EA Sports (01753 549442)



PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS 97 (92)

This game isn't quite better Super Tennis on the SNES, but it's as close as you'll come on the PC. With a simple control system, it's instantly playable, but the winner's shots still don't fly up when they serve.

Publisher:
Codemasters (01926 814132)



SENSIBLE WORLD OF SOCCER 95/97 (80)

Delayed so long that by the time it came out the world had moved on. Follow like Matthew T. Tissier taking a free kick. Did we say that? But still a classic. Always.

Publisher:
Warner Interactive (0171 258 3791)

Combat CHESS



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Adventures



ALONE IN THE DARK 3 (95)

Better than the original ATD masterpiece, AD3 is a fairly authentic tale of creepy Indian Mayan reincarnation that unfolds in the usual ATD manner. Memorable as part of a compilation budget price.

Publisher:

Magnum (0191 738 8199)



INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS (93)

Follow a past Avenger early in his search for the submerged continent. Three ways to play make this a highly replayable factor, and the in-game comic book is brilliant.

Publisher:

LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)



BIOFORGE (95)

Palatka's Alone in the Dark-style game with intensive graphics, puzzles, and soundtracks. Offered as a budget price as its unique blend of arcade and what is expected. The only thing is EA's refusal to make a sequel for it.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



LBA 2: TWIN'S ODYSSEY (93)

Twins, the sister with the magical sword, is back — this time to thwart those pesky Esmeres in this whimsical quest. The huge play area, replete with randomly linked paths, creates a great feeling and atmospheric adventure.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



SYSTEM SHOCK (95)

This futuristic first-person cyberpunk adventure from the makers of Ultima was initially overlooked by many gamers. Now available on budget, this is a must buy for those new to the genre. The graphics might be a little dated, but the atmosphere is magnificent.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



SAM & MAX (93)

Steve Purcell's hilarious dog/rabbit 'heavenly police' duo's first and only PC outing, in which they need to solve a host of bizarre puzzles. An absolute adventure with a yuck-baiter twist, this is an essential budget-priced purchase even if you're not a massive puzzle-solving fan.

Publisher:

LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)



STAR TREK TNG: A FINAL UNITY (94)

A step aside. At times it's as if you're inside a Star Trek TNG episode. Even if the graphics aren't as good, it's a fun, fast-paced adventure, fun to be honest.

Publisher:

MicroProse (01454 895211)



ECSTATICA II (90)

We dub it "An adventure with balls". It's true, but it's one of the most memorable adventures we've ever seen. It's a very serious and fun to be honest the most battle-wary adventure fan may find for weeks.

Publisher:

Pyramind (0151 282 3000)



DISCWORLD II (93)

Perfect Entertainment's first adventure game, Discworld II, would be a great search for the Grim. Not as hard as the first game, but much better looking. Discworld II is a wonderfully appealing adventure game.

Publisher:

Psygnosis (0115 282 3000)



THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND 2: LECHUCK'S REVENGE (94)

Anyone with even a casual interest in adventure must own this game. The graphics look dated, but the game is a masterpiece. And it's a classic.

Publisher:

LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)

Role-Playing Games



ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 2: LABYRINTH OF WORLDS (94)

This improves on almost every aspect of its precursor, The Stygian Abyss. You explore a complex, ever-evolving dungeon, it has a unique atmosphere and interaction.

Publisher:

Magnum (01753 549442)



RAVENLOFT: STONE PROPHET (90)

A great improvement over ASI's previous AD&D Ravenloft RPG. The graphics are average, but the intuitive quest system is a joy.

Publisher:

Magnum (01444 245521)

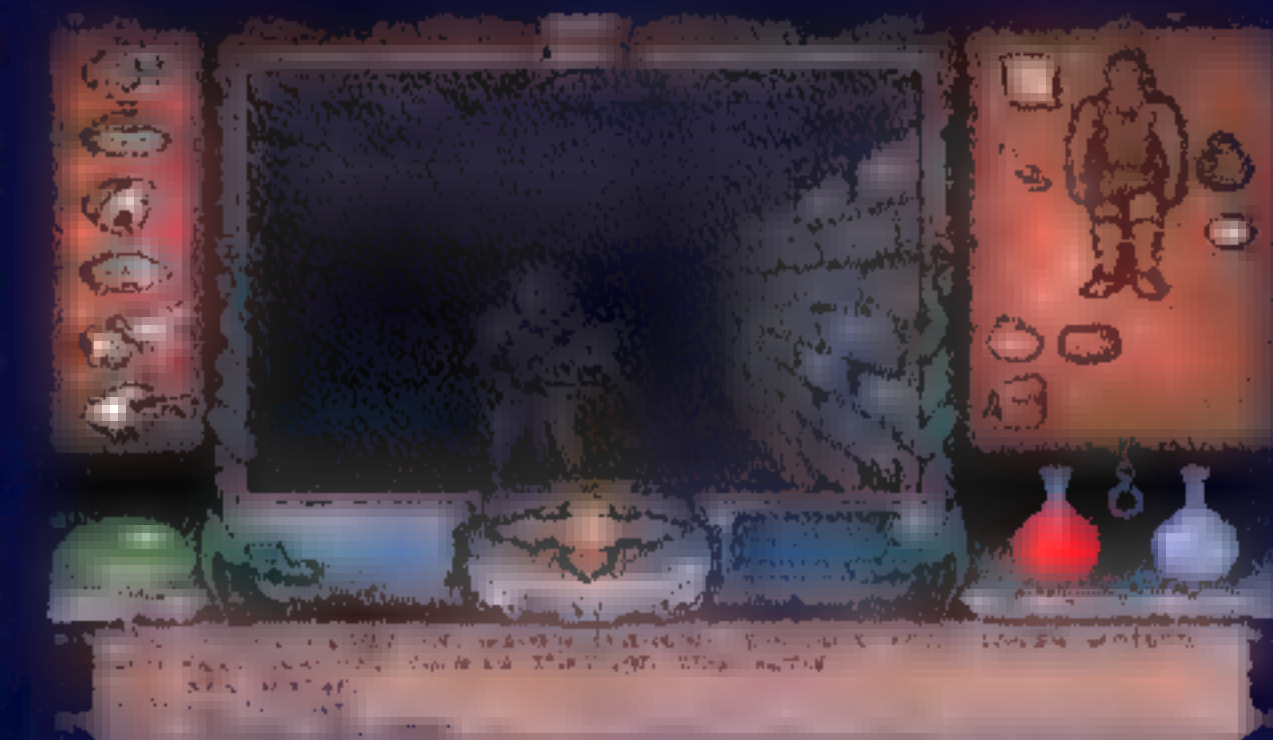


LANDS OF LORE: GUARDIANS OF DESTINY (92)

Four years in the making, Westwood Studios' mammoth new adventure turns out to be more than worth the wait. Sumptuous visuals and a memorable atmosphere make this adventure an instant classic.

Publisher:

VIE (0171 368 2255)



ULTIMA UNDERWORLD: THE STYGIAN ABYSS (94)

This one took RPGs away from first-person, tile-based RPGs. Amazing architecture, witty characterisations, layers of mystery and the best ending of any game in history. Buy it and believe it.

Publisher:

Magnum (01753 549442)

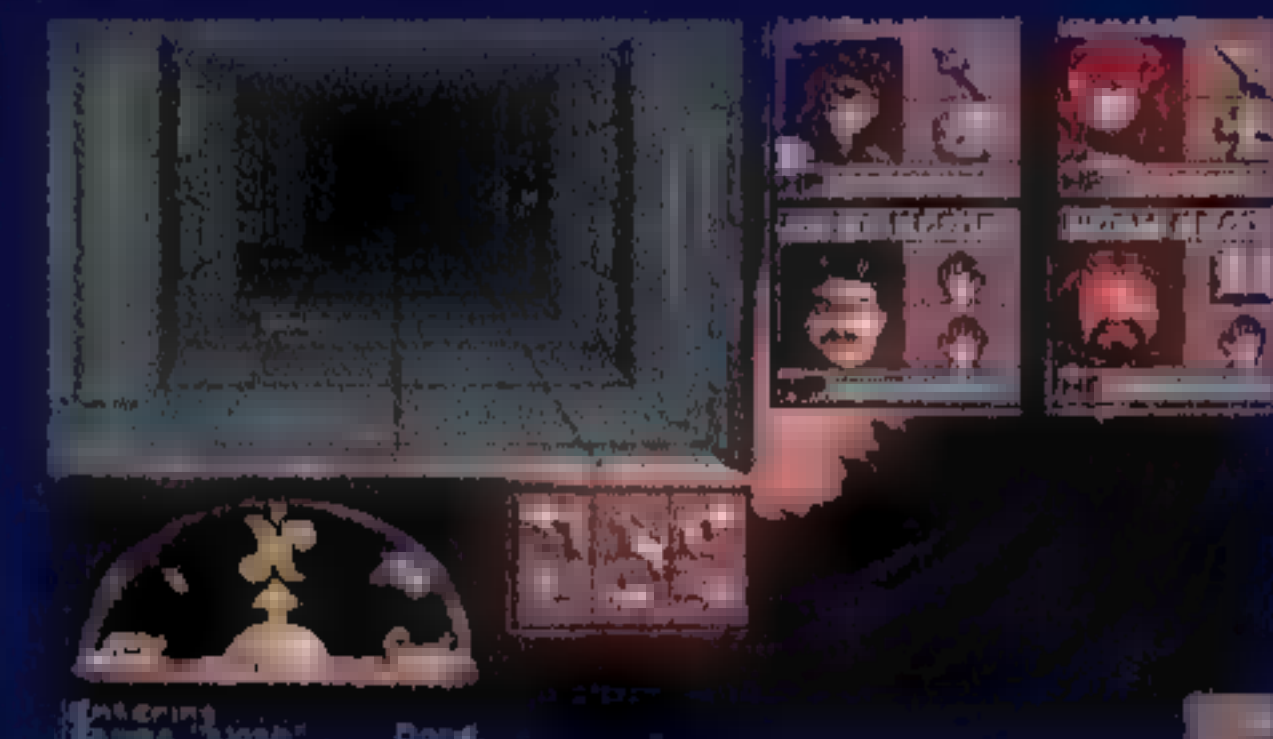


DIABLO (88)

Diablo is standard 'hack 'n' slash fare but the game's designers pull the whole thing off with such style that the overall game is a masterpiece. A great storyline, a great game, and a great animation makes it a must-have coffee-table game.

Publisher:

Zabrac/Blizzard (01627 332233)



EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II (90)

It's one of those 'olde-worlde', first-person RPGs, but it's a masterpiece. The storyline, the graphics, and the elements set it worlds apart from all the other RPGs. The first-screen graphics are a bit dated, but the game is still worth a look.

Publisher:

VIE (0171 368 2255)

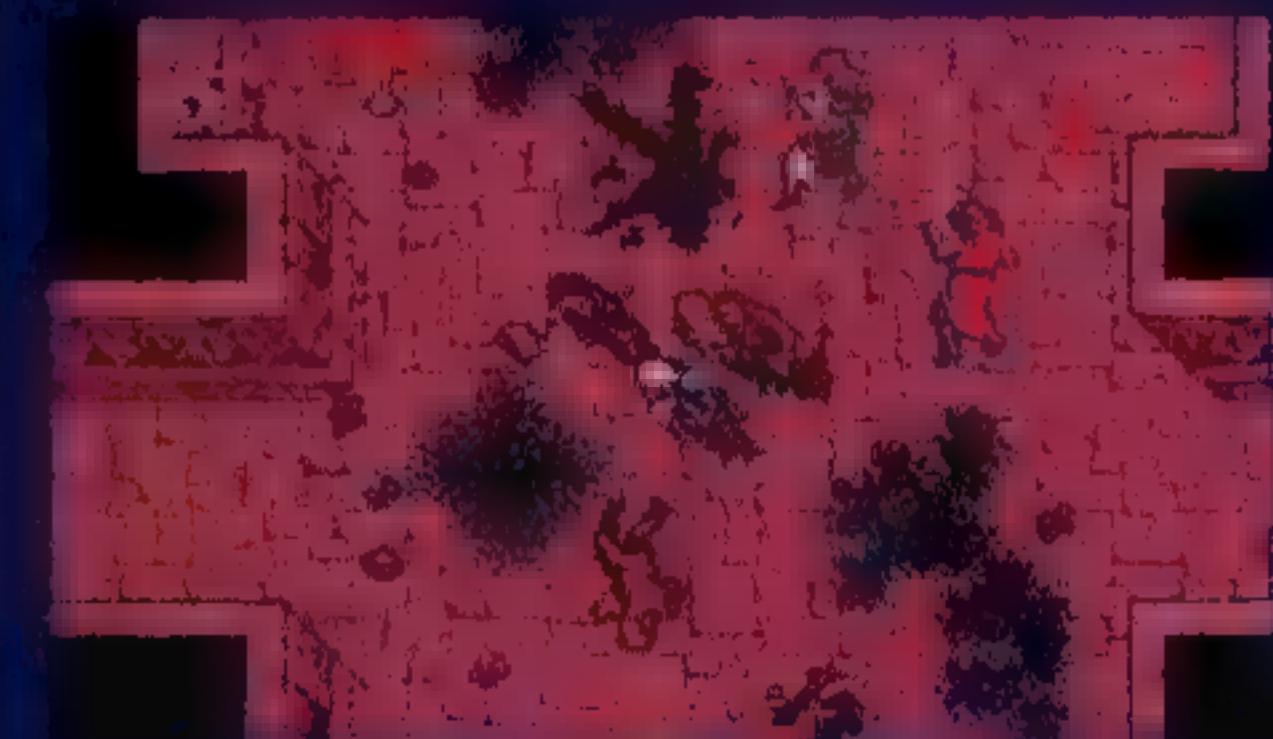


TERRIS (88)

A MUD in the old-school style of text-based RPGs, but so addictive we're still playing it. The quests, puzzles and monsters will keep you hooked. The game is a masterpiece, if you can handle the 'language'.

Publisher:

AOL (0800 2797444)



ULTIMA VII (89)

Arguably the best of all the Ultima games, Ultima VII is a masterpiece. The storyline, the graphics, and the elements set it worlds apart from all the other RPGs. The first-screen graphics are a bit dated, but the game is still worth a look.

Publisher:

Magnum (01753 549442)



MERIDIAN 59 (86)

This is a masterpiece. A classic RPG, though cursed with garish and horrible graphics, it has thousands of people to immerse with each other in the same fantasy universe at the same time. Currently one of the best text-based RPGs around.

Publisher:

3DO Company (0181 296 1949)



BETRAYAL AT KRONDDOR (94)

First-person, turn-based RPG with a huge game world and fairly complex battle system. Failed to take the crown from Ultima due to limited character interaction, but a worthy second place.

Publisher:

Sierra (0118 920 9100)



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HEXEN II

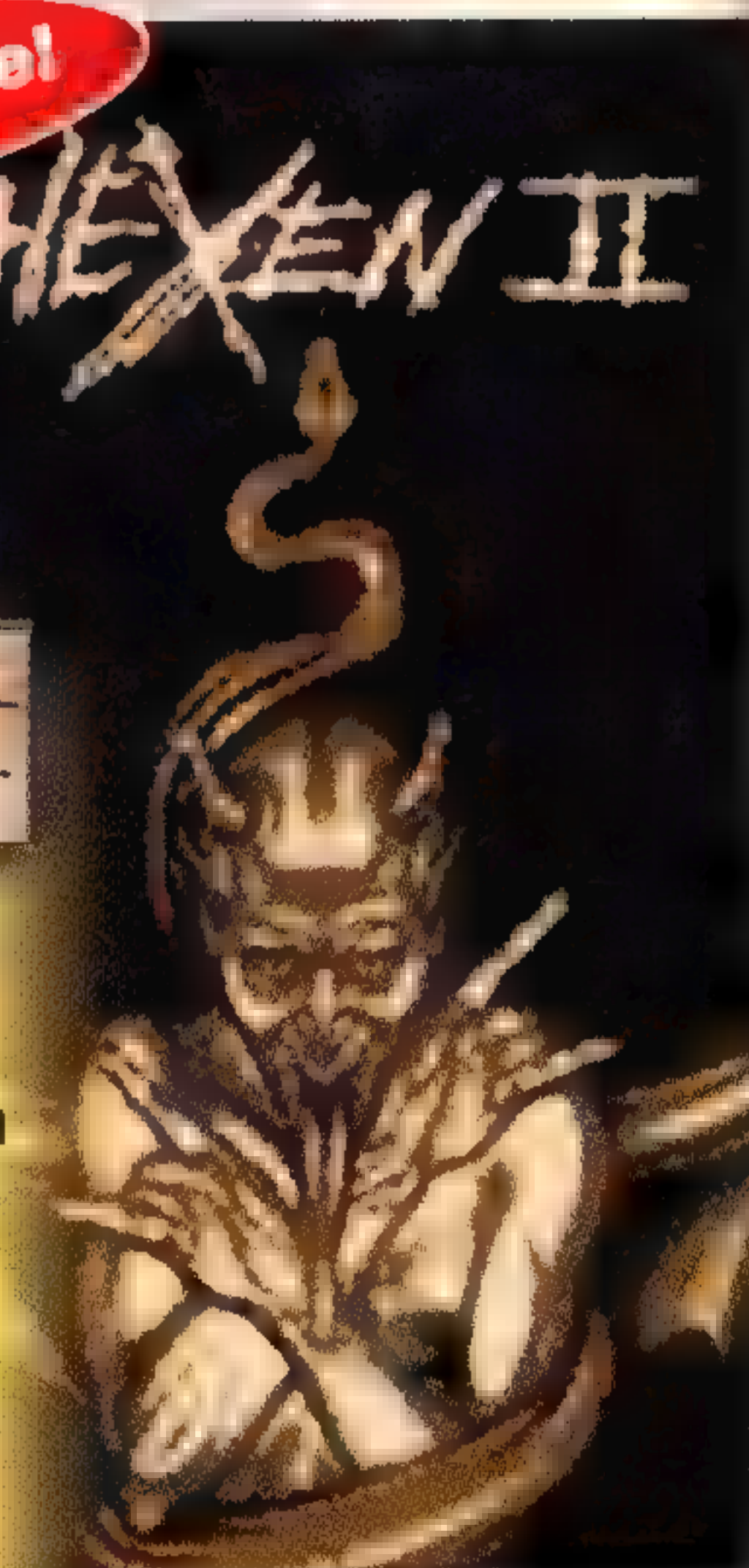
HEXEN II

Hexen II

Deathmatch

now

available!



Strategy



DUNGEON KEEPER (96)

A game with a genre almost impossible to define. *DK* takes *Age of Empires*, *C&C* and *Ultima Underworld* and mashes them into one hell of a title. Excellent gameplay, and a bonus on a par with the Queen Mother.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



INCUBATION (94)

Darkly atmospheric and novel strategy game with graphics to die for. This is a real force change from the surface stream of *C&C* clones and is as challenging as any action-based.

Publisher:

Blue Byte (01604 232200)



SYNDICATE WARS (95)

One of the best strategy games of all time gets a sequel, and what a fabulous sequel it is too. It inherits a wealth of brilliant ideas, superior graphics and enough glorious violence to keep anyone happy.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)

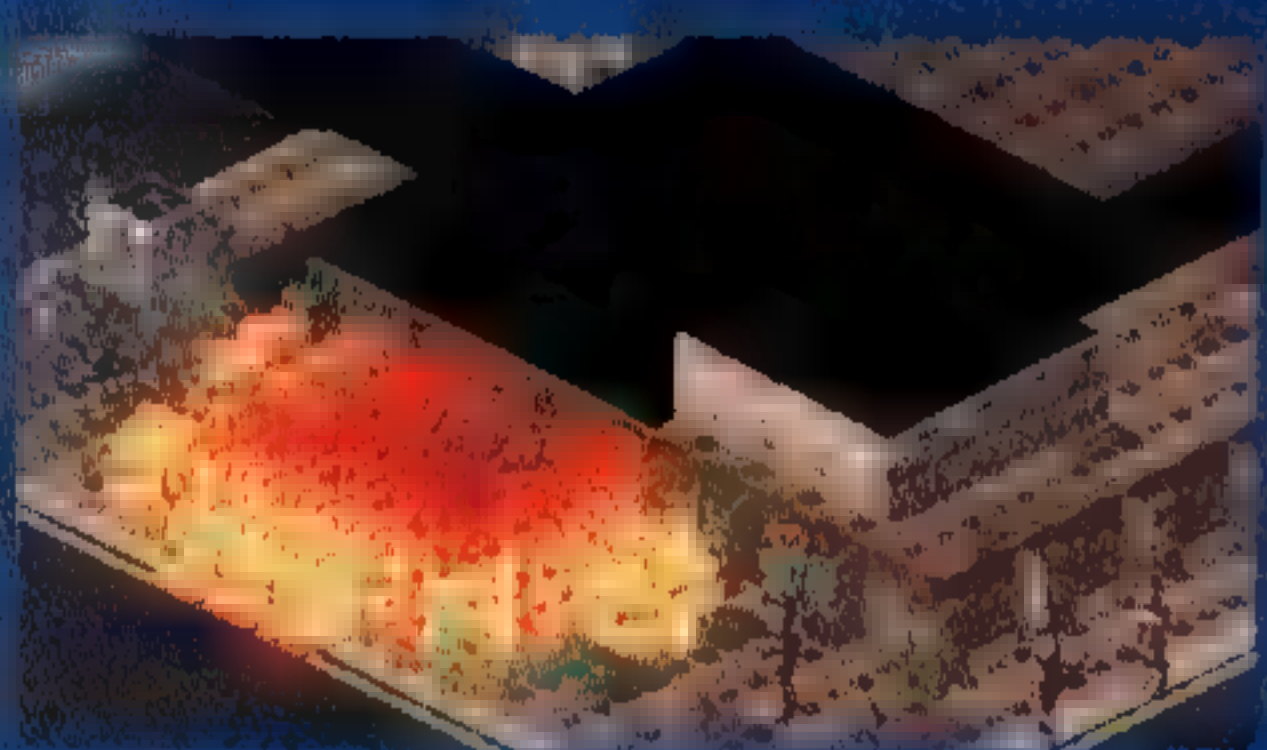


AGE OF EMPIRES (94)

Think of *Age of Empires*. Imagine the same game engine, better gameplay, some excellent graphical touches and some impressive music and sound effects. (all in that order). That's *Age of Empires*. It's a nutshell.

Publisher:

Microsoft (0345 002000)

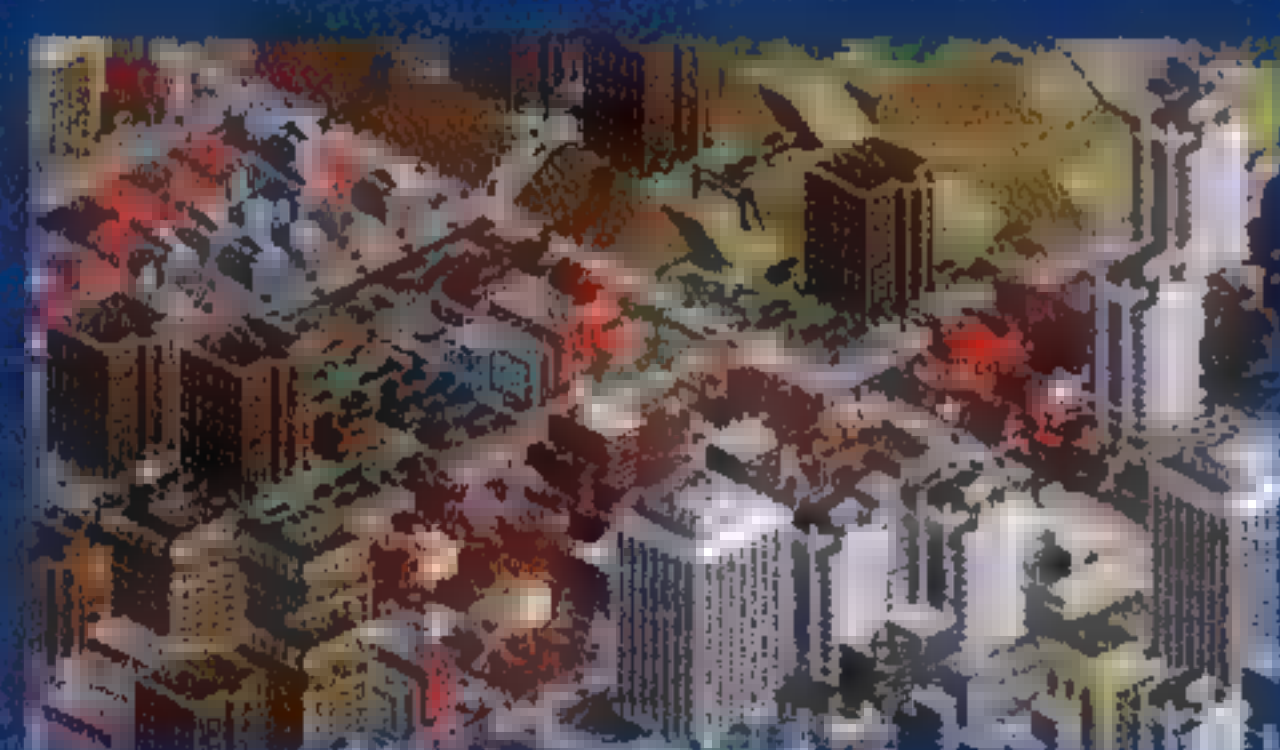


X-COM 3: APOCALYPSE (95)

A real-time combat have brought the futuristic action *X-COM* series bang up to date. If you like your strategy games that are interesting, you should try *X-COM*. It immediately will have you saying 'wow'.

Publisher:

MicroProse (01494 893893)

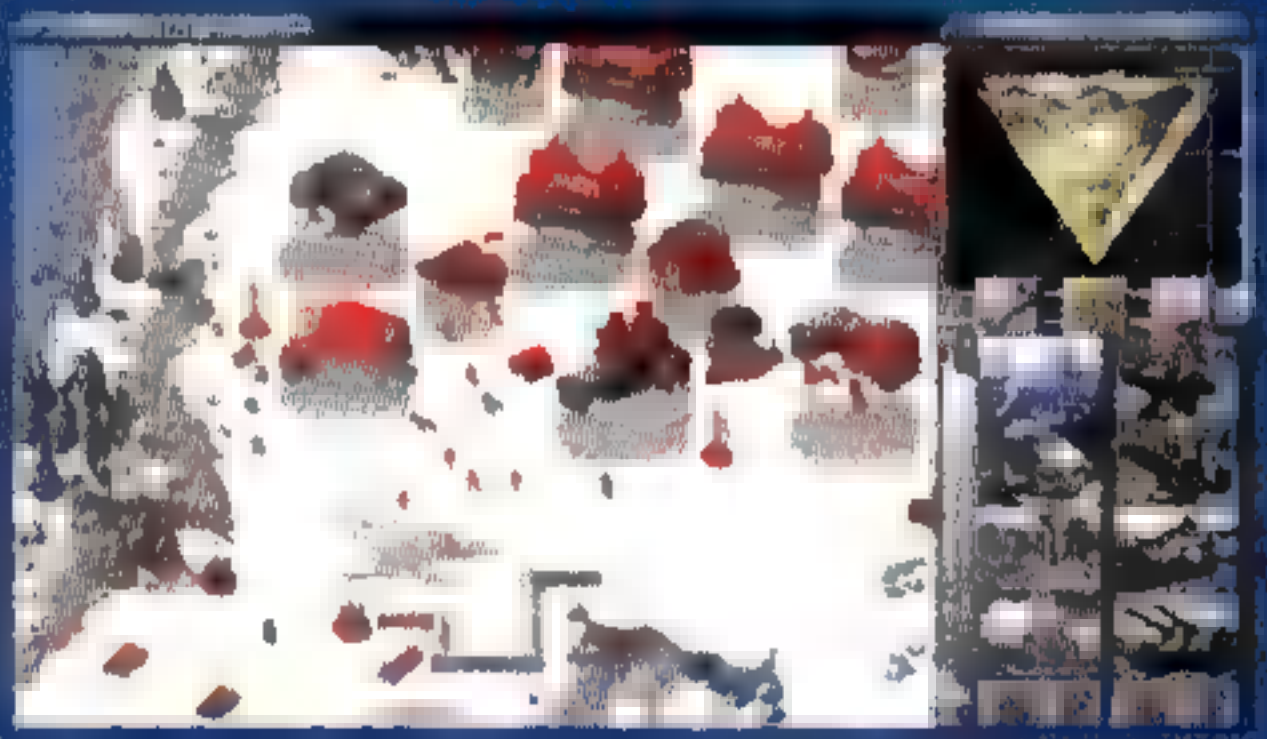


SIMCITY 2000 (92)

A classic game that deserves its reputation as one of the all-time greats in the strategy world. Build and maintain the city of your dreams and cope with all the problems a real-life Mayor would have up against. It's a lot more fun than it sounds, trust us.

Publisher:

Maxis (0171 505 1500)

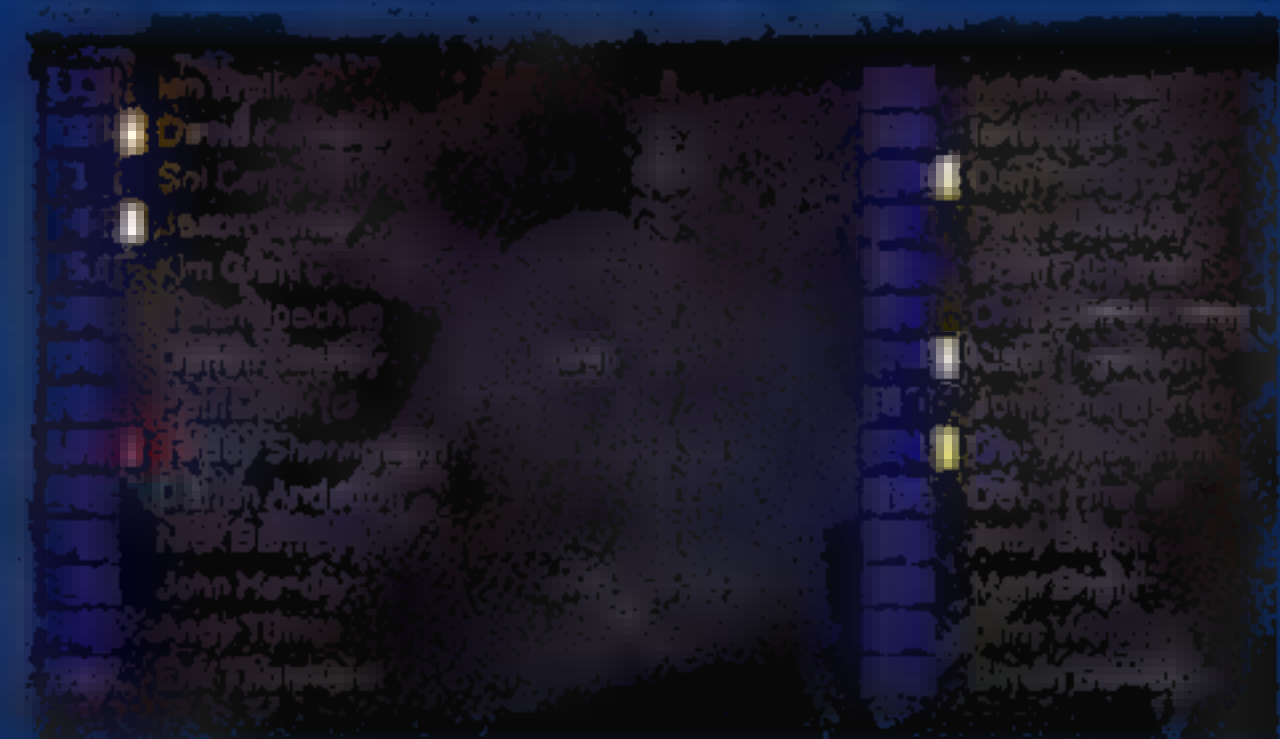


COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT (94)

C&C in SVGA with a few new units. It's a testament to the original's gameplay that the sequel can get away with adding few new features and still be fun to play.

Publisher:

Westwood (01777 368 2255)



CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2 (90)

So you want to be a football manager? Well so does our Jimmy, which is why he spends his life playing this, the most realistic, addictive football management game available.

Publisher:

Eidos Interactive (0181 780 2222)

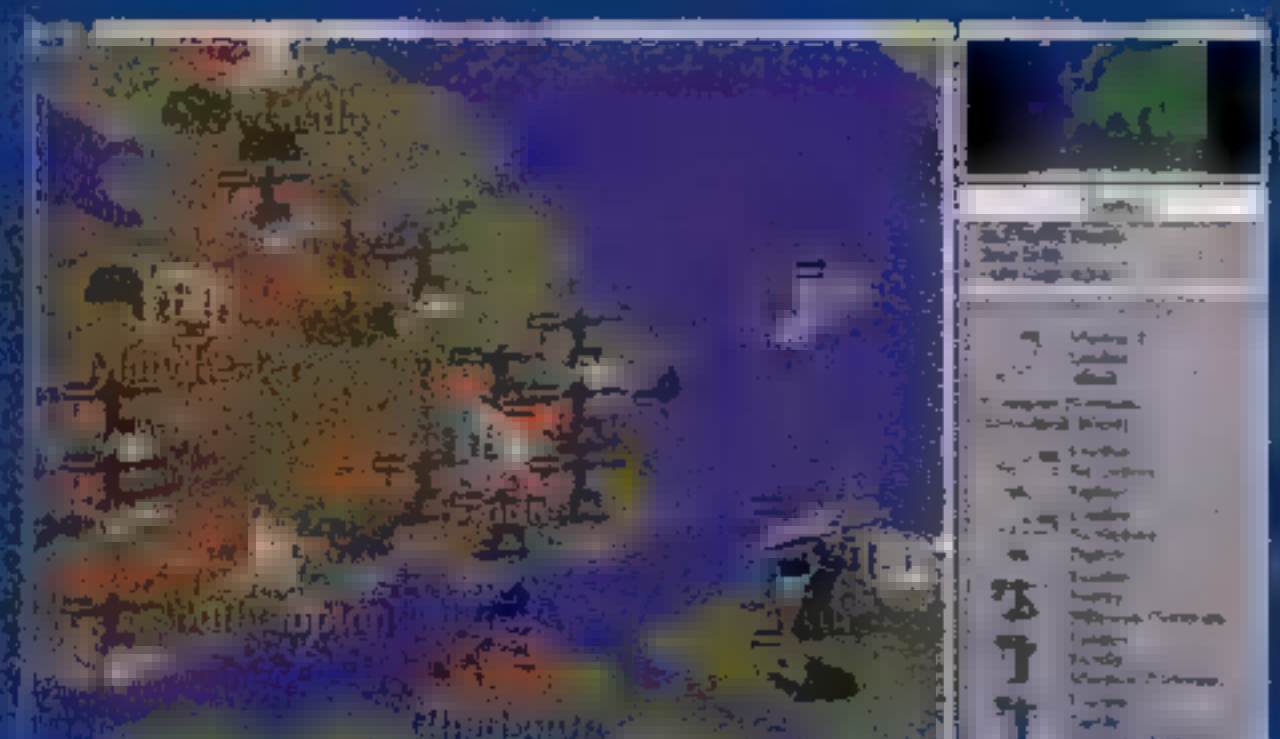


PUZZLE BOBBLE (94)

We can't agree exactly where *Puzzle Bobble* fits in the PC Zone Recommends. Does it belong in row with the *Civs* and *Arms* of the PC gaming world, or should it go in the action section? Who says we're as dumb as it's title?

Publisher:

GT Interactive (0171 250 7701)



CIVILIZATION 2 (90)

Follow the world, conquer territories and research new technologies in one of the most successful strategy games ever. It's not that different to the first one, but it merits a '90s update and a sequel.

Publisher:

MicroProse (01494 893893)

Flight Simulations

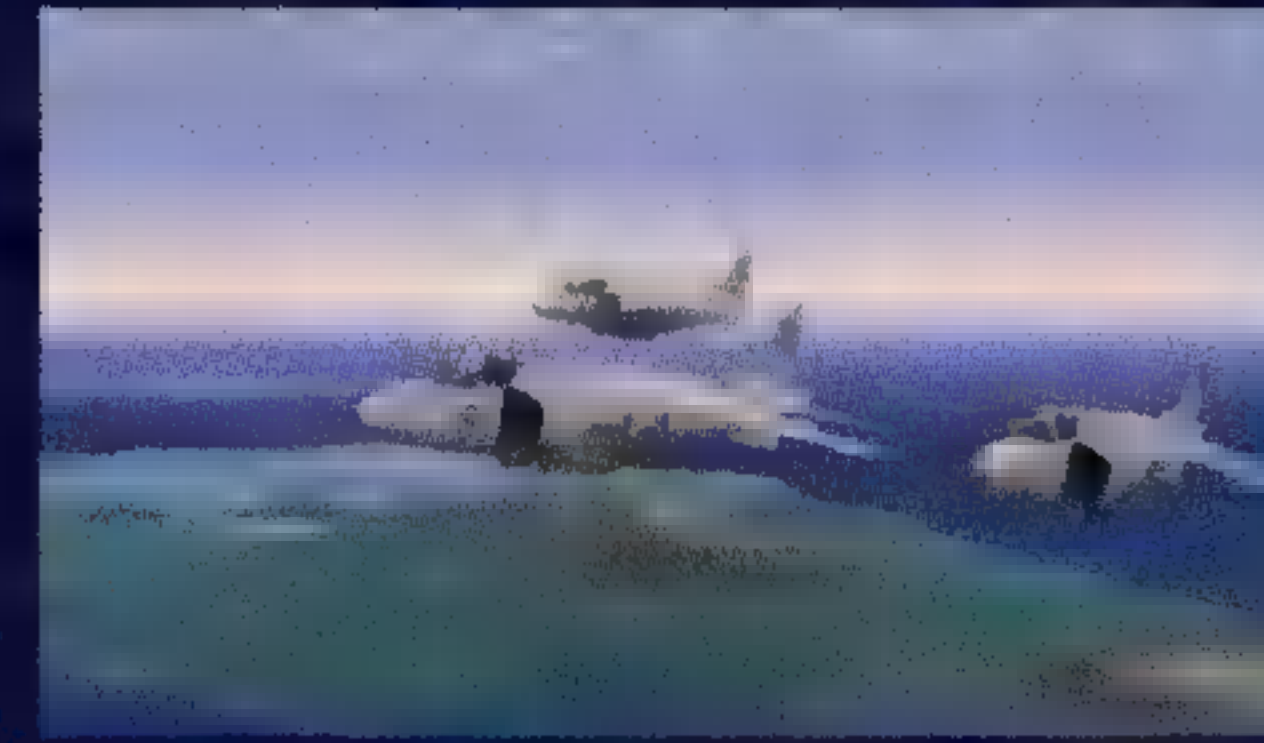


EF2000 (97)

With realistic physics and a very realistic flight model, this is one of the best flight sims on the PC. Not even Microsoft's *Flight Sim* can touch it from the top of the PC Zone playground ladder.

Publisher:

Ocean/DID (0161 832 6633)

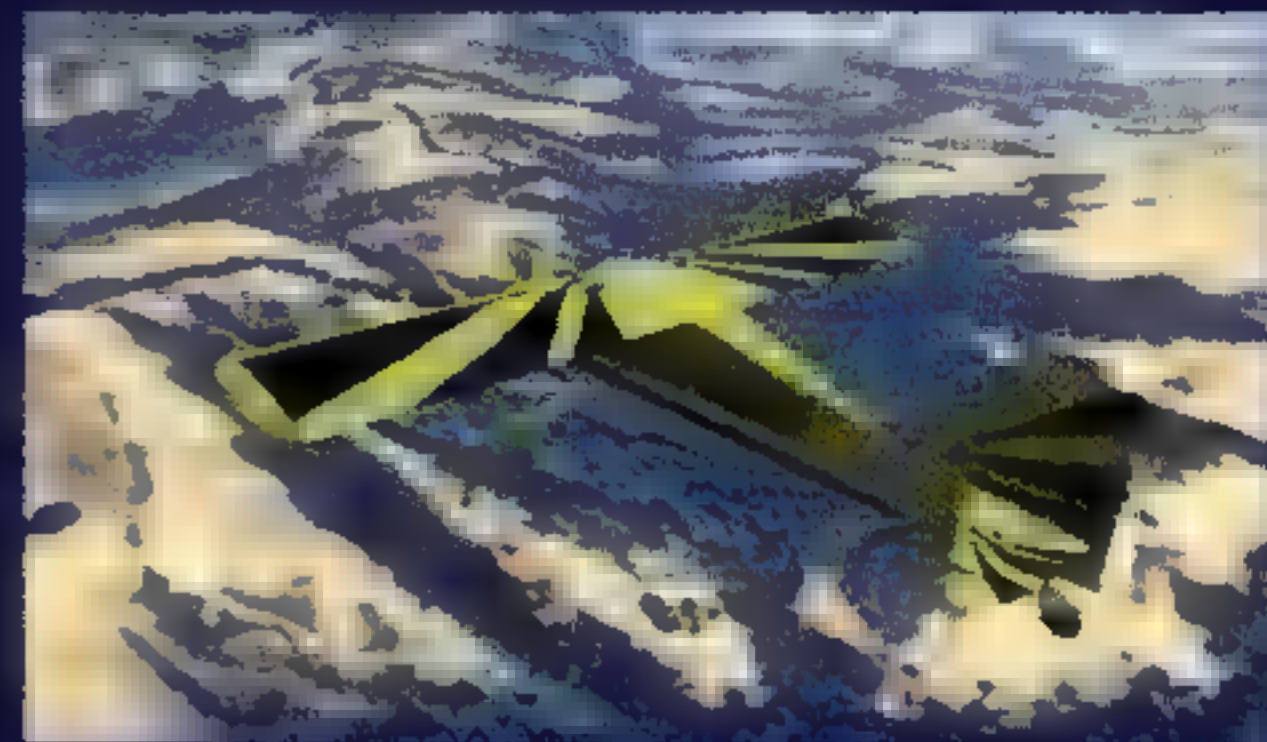


US MARINE FIGHTERS (92)

Lowly graphics and a realistic enough flight model. Originally released as a mission disk for *US Navy Fighters*, *Marine Fighters* now comes as part of the *US Navy Fighters Gold* pack, to go with that instalment.

Publisher:

Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



FLIGHT UNLIMITED (96)

This was the first flight sim to genuinely amazing graphics and a frighteningly realistic flight model. You don't get to kill anyone (just like *Flight Sim 95*) but it still stands up well against today's competitors and you still need a lovely machine to fly it.

Publisher:

Lookout Glass/Virgin (0171 368 2255)



FLYING CORPS (92)

Action-packed WWI flight sim with never-ending graphics. Amongst games will recall *Red Baron* as one of the greatest WWI flight sims ever - it's impossible on the old classic to become the best WWI sim currently available for the PC.

Publisher:

Empire Interactive (0181 343 7337)



APACHE LONGBOW (96)

The EF2000 of helicopter sims, in as much as it makes for graphics with a realistic flight model. The structure encourages you to adopt the same tactics as a real Apache pilot (or as we're told) and the missions are challenging and varied enough to keep you at it for weeks. It's big, bad.

Publisher:

Digital Immersion (01276 684959)



COMANCHE 3 (92)

This latest version of the *Comanche* flight sim is without a doubt the finest we've seen yet, spanning juicy terrain graphics due to a superb Westwood engine. Despite an accurate flight model it still delivers superb gameplay and is extremely good fun.

Publisher:

Novalogic (0171 405 1777)

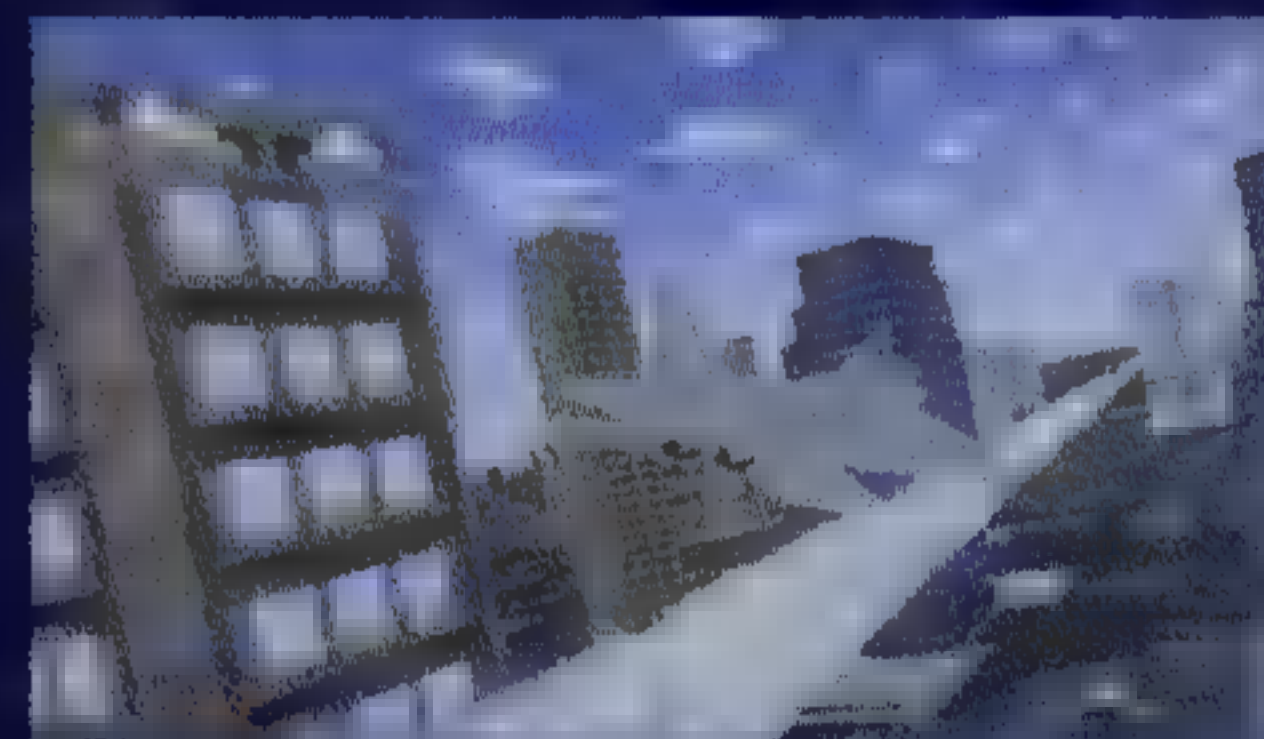


FLIGHT SIM 98 (94)

Another year, and yet another flight sim from Microsoft. However, this time, with two new aircraft, a hundred hundreds of new airports and massive AI simulation, it's just worth trying.

Publisher:

Microsoft (0345 002 000)



JETFIGHTER III (91)

The follow-up to one of the most popular flight sims ever. Fly over three and a half million square miles of superbly mapped terrain of South America. You get to shoot things too, but there's no duty free collision.

Publisher:

Eidos Interactive (0181 780 2222)



SU27 FLANKER (95)

One for flight sim purists, admittedly the graphics are crap, but our reviewers lived about it. A great flight model and superb mission builder make it an essential buy for purists everywhere, just don't expect your mate to be impressed.

Publisher:

Mindustry (01444 246333)



4-10 CUBA (90)

Functional graphics (enough) for a game that captures the imagination, mainly because the plane is an absolute joy to fly. Slightly limited with the absence of a fully-fledged campaign but great fun nonetheless, and pretty handy demo modes.

Publisher:

Activision (01895 456700)

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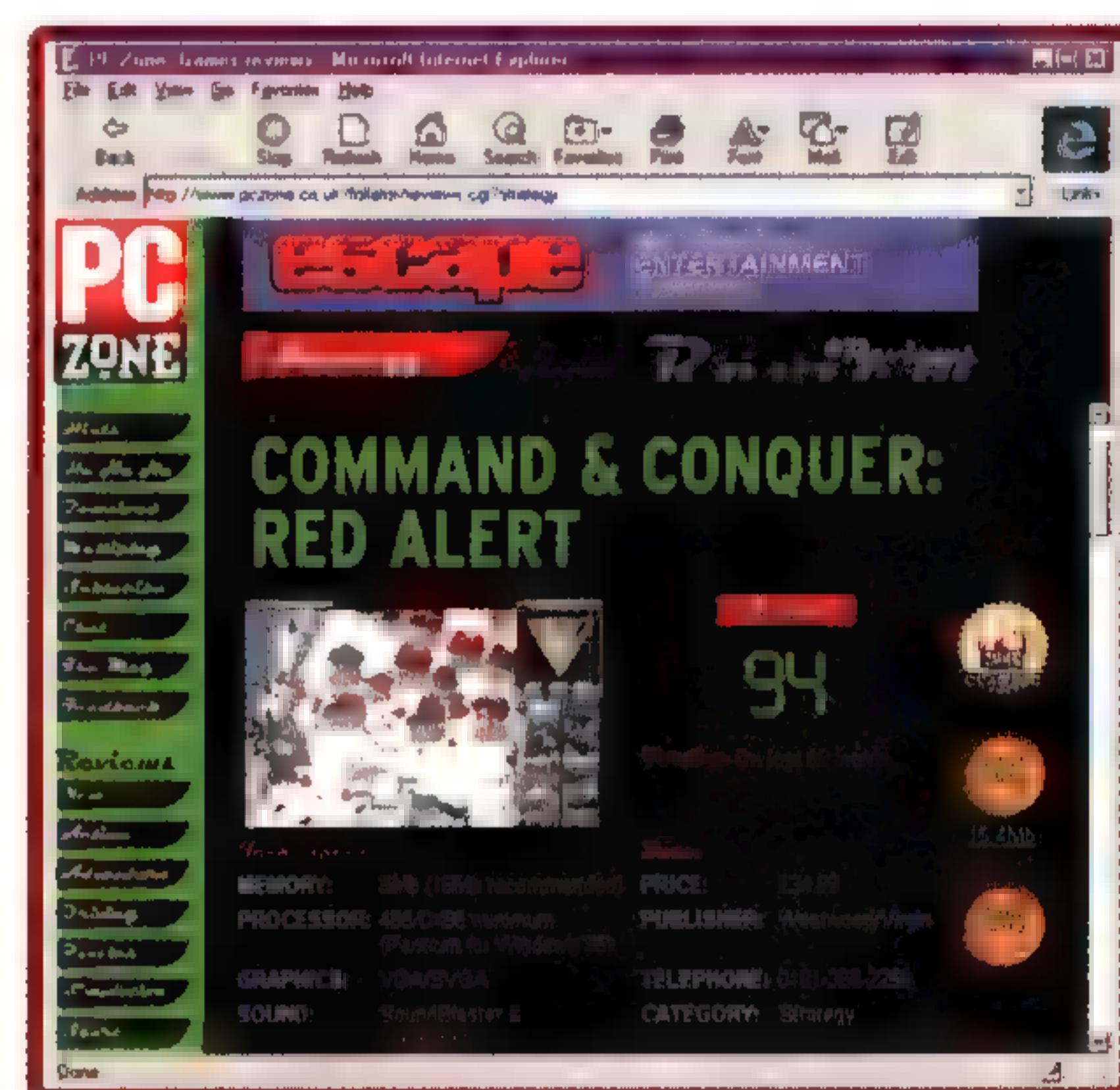
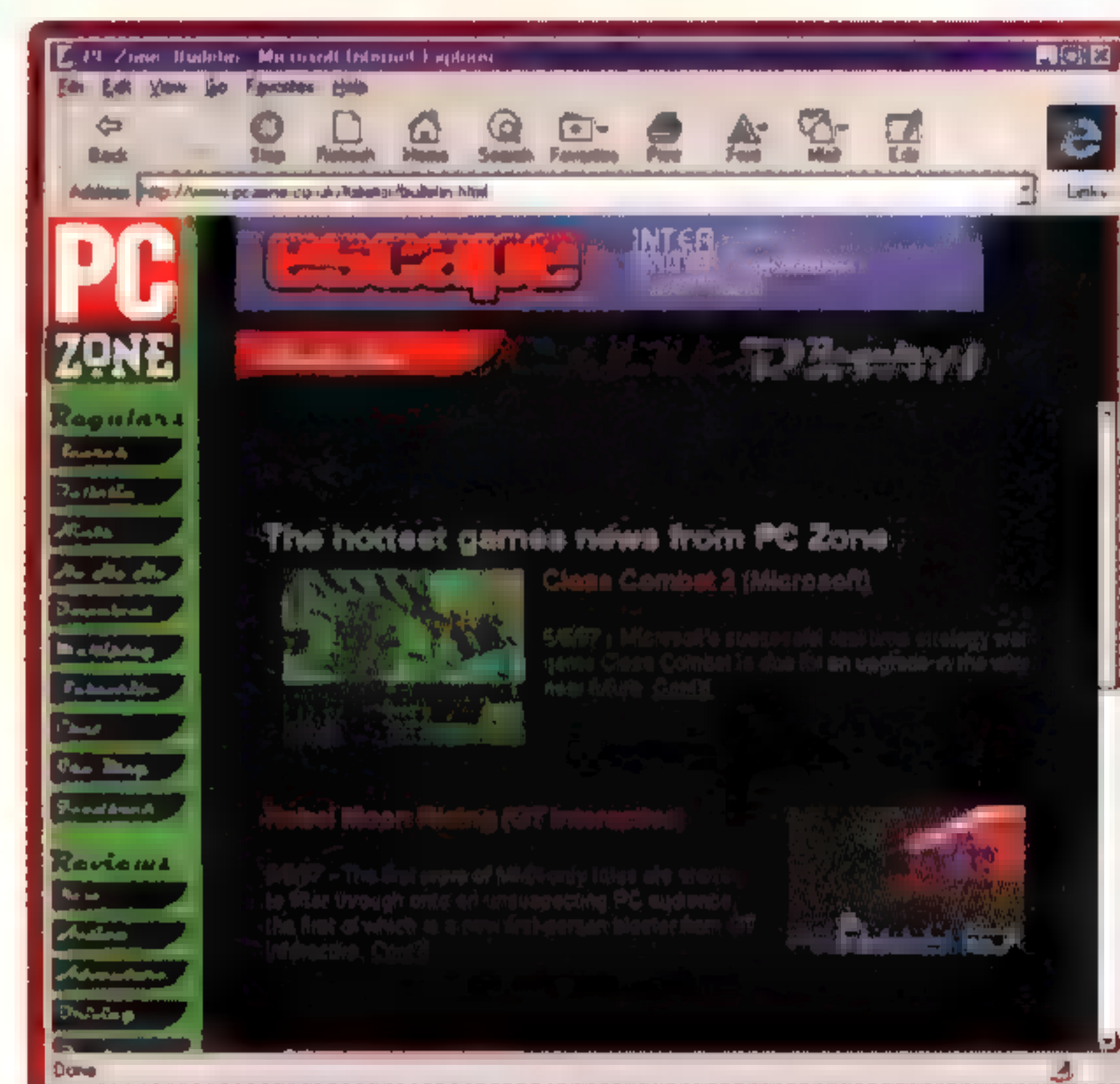
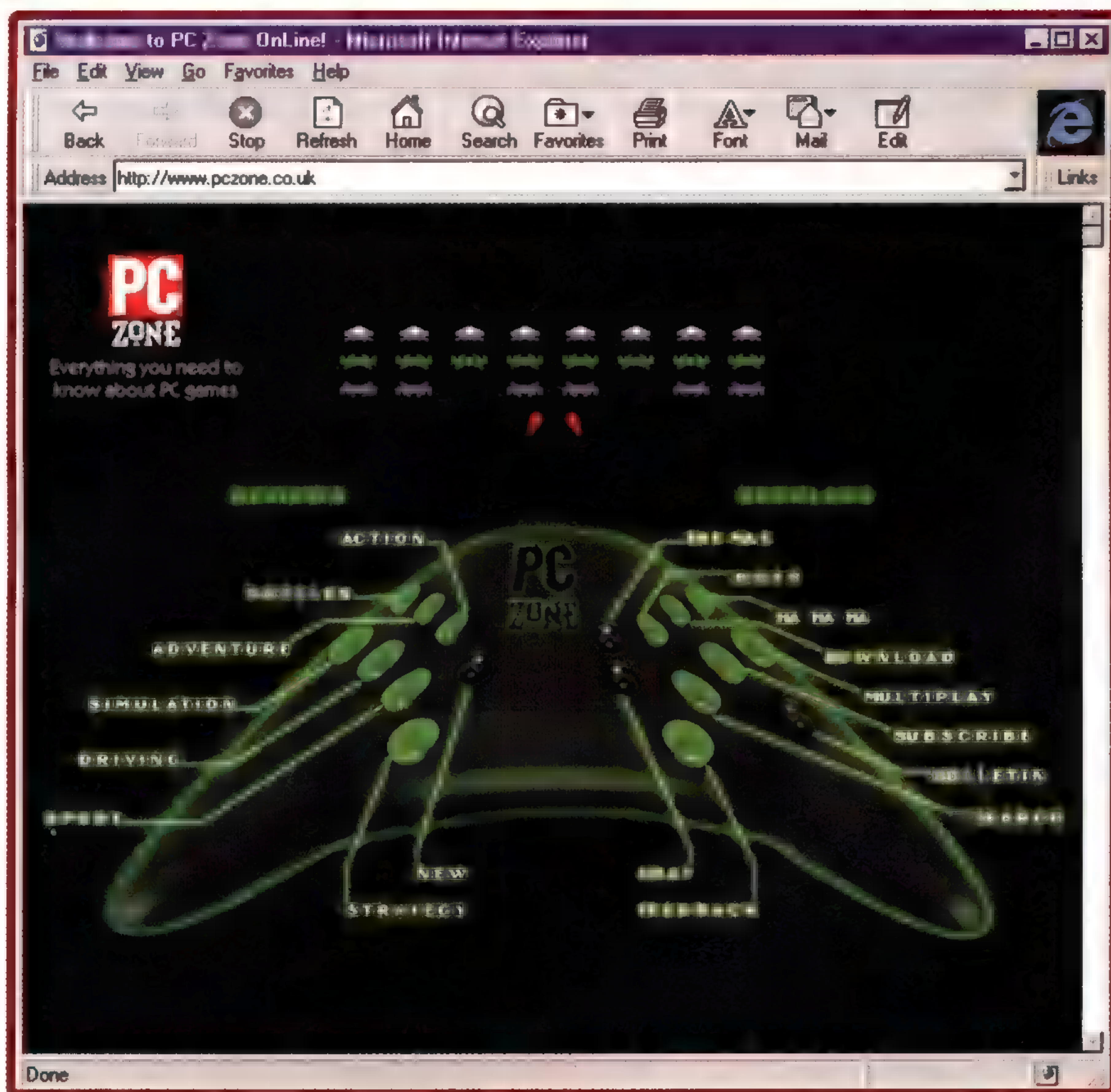
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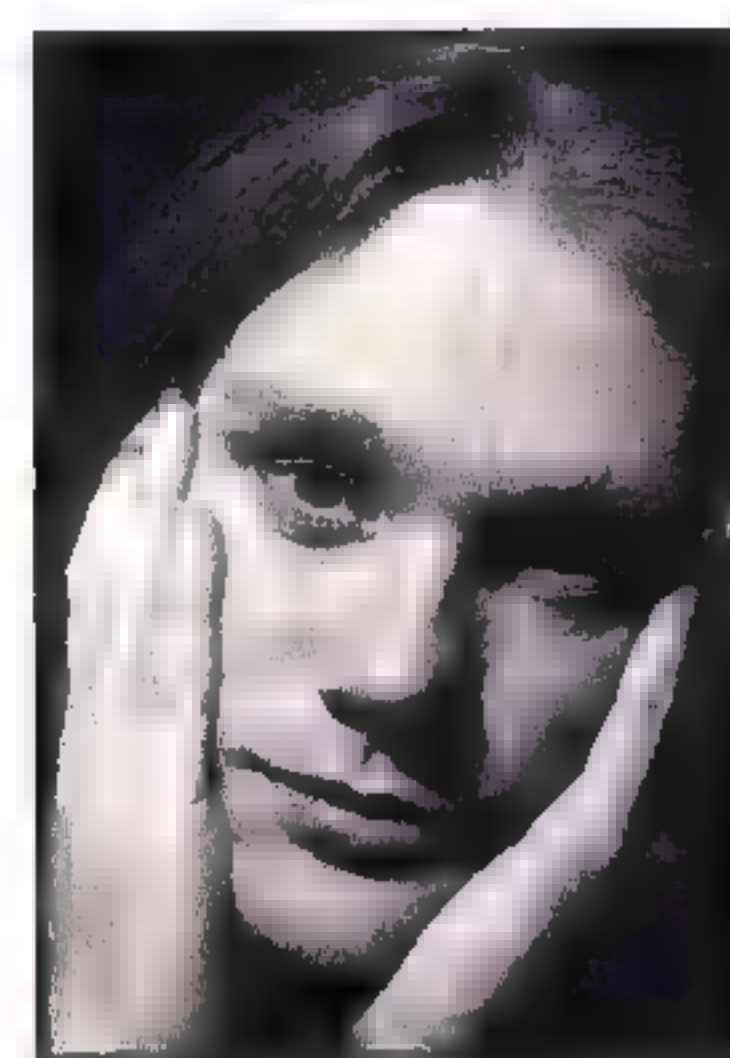
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Is *Dungeon Keeper* too easy? Have LucasArts really ruined *Monkey Island*? What 3D accelerator card should you buy and how do you keep your girlfriend happy while you're sat in front of your PC? Jeremy Wells dodges the issues...



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Look out for the PC
Zone chat forum if
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correspondence in an effort to
make our letters appear smug,
witty and intelligent.

WHAT NO DEMOS?

Why were there no demos of *Jedi Knight* and *Hexen II* on the CD last month, as you promised? I was looking forward to playing them both, and they weren't there. Please make sure this doesn't happen again. By the way, when is *SimCity 3000* being released?

One word to all those people who think consoles are the best: *Shadows Of The Empire* looks a lot better on the PC, so there.

Oh yeah – is it me, or does *Star Trek: First Contact* look rubbish?

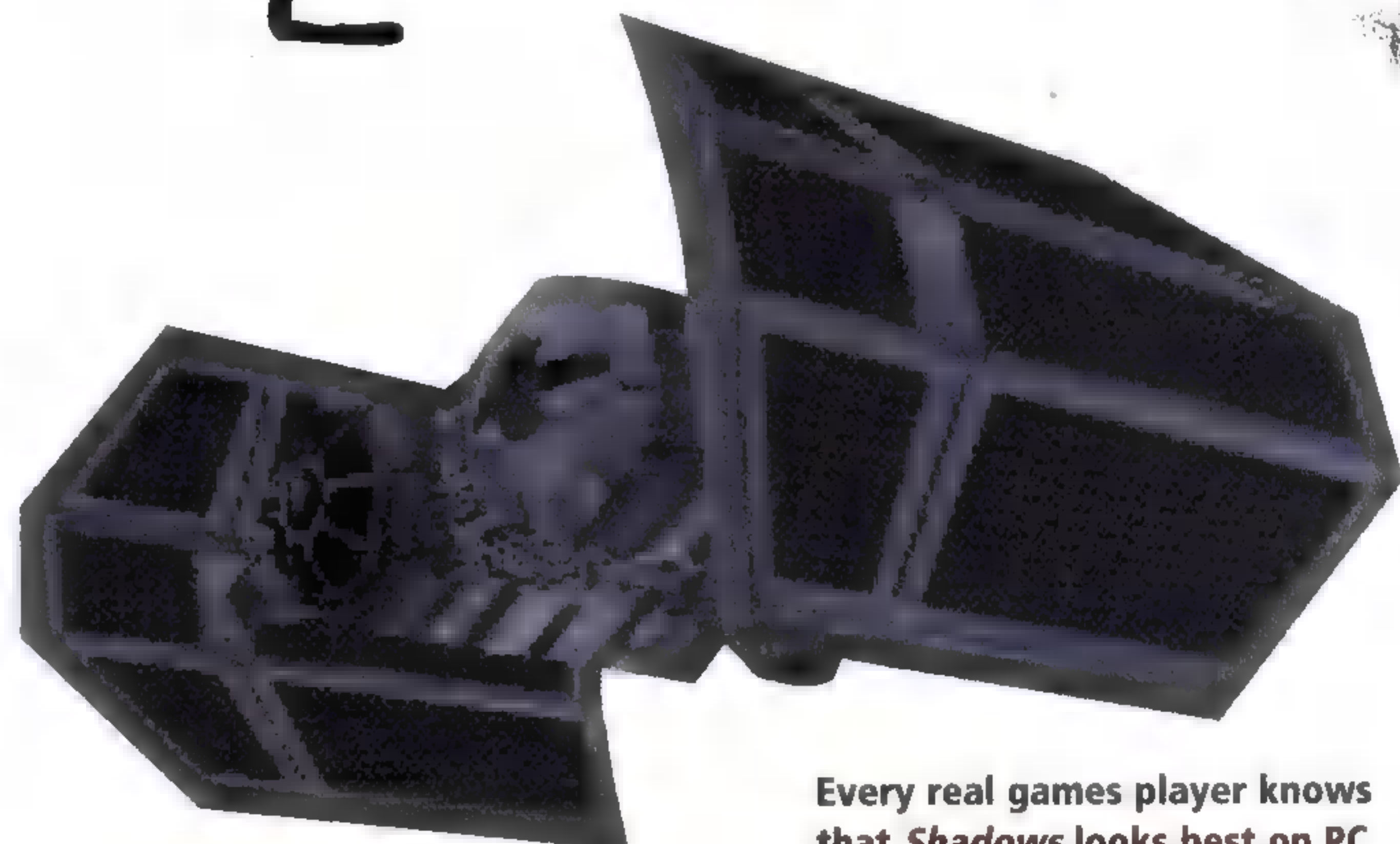
David Burns, Cix

Abig sorry to you and everyone else who bought the October issue of the mag expecting to play both *Hexen II* and *Jedi*. Unfortunately, the publishers sent the demos too late for us to include them on the CD – but then we did have an exclusive *Dungeon Keeper* demo for you to check out. However, I think last month's CD more than made up for it, and as if that wasn't enough, this month's CD has an EXCLUSIVE playable *Tomb Raider 2* demo and a massive *Jedi Knight* demo on it.

Yep, *Shadows* does look much better on PC, but then we've yet to see a decent Mario 64 clone, have we? As far as we know, *SimCity 3000* has slipped into early next year. *First Contact* doesn't look rubbish at all – you just saw some very early shots that featured very raw artwork. The developers have held back the release date until Spring next year, so rest assured it will look fab – it uses the UNREAL engine, after all.

CIVILIZATION III

Someone posted on the usenet that your magazine (this month's issue) stated that MicroProse's *Civilization III* will



Every real games player knows that *Shadows* looks best on PC.

be released in April 1998. Can you confirm this? I've tried to find a store that carries PC Zone here in Ottawa, Canada, but I haven't had any luck. Any other information that you can provide would be appreciated. Thanks.

Chad Bertrand, Canada

We've been given a rough release date for *Civ III*, but it's yet to be confirmed by MicroProse. All we know is that it's not being developed by Sid Meier, but will incorporate some new features as well as all the things that made the first two games so great. In the meantime, try *Age Of Empires* from Microsoft – it's bloody brilliant.

If you're having trouble finding PC Zone in Canada, then why not subscribe? Try e-mailing our subs line on cihotline@aol.com

LOSE THE PLASTIC

Iam very disappointed in you. We Australians have to pay 13 friggin' bucks for a magazine which doesn't get all the CDs we're supposed to, and the ones we do get, we get in a crappy plastic sleeve and they usually don't work. Please fix your damn mag up so we get all the CDs, working, in a proper plastic cover. Okay?! Cheers.

Jesse and Paul, Australia

P.S. In case you can't tell, I am pissed off at your unusually excellent mag. P.P.S. Good mag, crappy CD storage.

Okay. You gave us *Neighbours*, *Home & Away*, *Prisoner* Cell Block H, *Jason Donovan*, the *Minogue* sisters (thanks, by the way), *Craig McCoughlin*, etc, and we charge you more for the mag, so it's fair enough really. However, you'll be pleased to hear that we've stopped putting the CDs in "crappy plastic sleeves" and we've sacked the student we employed specially to scratch the CDs that we send to Australia (and France).

PC ZONE ABROAD

Hello, my name is Dunc. I buy your magazine every month and I'm a big fan of your magazine. I've heard that a Benelux edition of your mag is coming. Since I'm from the Netherlands, I'm very interested in this. I heard about it a few months ago, but I couldn't find anything about it in PC Zone. Since I haven't heard any more about it, I was hoping you could give me some information, like when the first issue is out, and how to subscribe.

Dunc, Netherlands

Punc, howsitgoinalwight? The first issue of PC Zone Benelux is on sale now (it's got *Tomb Raider 2* on the cover). It offers a similar mix and style of editorial, and retails for



It's PC Zone Benelux - available now from all good newsagents - in the Netherlands.

Letter of the Month

A VOICE FROM DOWN UNDER

I m a German-Australian, so there's two reasons for you guys to hate me and tease me, as I'm sure you will, no matter what. Anyway, I just want to say that your mag is brilliant, better than anything Australia has to offer, and I love every minute of it. Also, your PC Zone Website is excellent, especially the Chat site. I never thought I'd get involved in any sort of chat site when I first went on-line, but I really enjoy chewing the cud with other Zone readers.

As for the subject of *Carmageddon*, a subject we all talk about, I think the game is great, but only once those annoying pedestrians have been turned off. I think that killing them is really unnecessary, and I have an explanation as to why this killing is wrong and why it's "perfectly acceptable" in other games like *Duke Nukem*, *Quake*, or *C&C*. It all comes down to the survival situation. In *Carmageddon*, the killing is unmemorable and unwarranted – senseless really. In fact, the game even rewards you by giving you time and points, for God's sake. The notion of rewarding someone for killing is wrong, but in *Duke 3D* or *C&C*, the premise of the game is that aliens, or Nod or GDI are invading your homeland and invading your morals (Nod's morals are wrong as well, but the fact that they believe in their

morals is what makes it right for them in their eyes), and that since the enemy force is going to kill you, the only way to SURVIVE is to fight back. In *Duke*, the killing is also placed in a survival



situation, and, may I add, not a single human gets killed. I know you can shoot strippers, but heh, they're not women, they are alien spawn (or something – they're not human at any rate.)

For those who are not entirely convinced about this explanation, let's play a little role-playing game. A murderer breaks into your home and threatens you, your family, your kids. You have an opportunity to save them by killing this person. Wouldn't you do it? However, as I said, in *Carmageddon* the killing has no point and is totally senseless. Oh, and in *Quake*

it's also a survival situation, only this time you're fighting Satan, so it's alright.

Still, these are only my opinions and I shall no doubt evoke a wave of slander and criticism. However, before it all kicks off, please remember I like the game, and even if I didn't, I wouldn't call for it to be banned as I am vehemently opposed to censorship (except when it comes to sexually and violently explicit material involving minors). I just felt a need to join the debate and voice my opinions. I thank PC Zone for letting me do so.

Leif AKA Darkling1 (my registration name on the PC Zone Website)
Brisbane, Australia

Y ou've obviously given the *Carmageddon* issue a lot of thought and raised a couple of valid points. But at the end of the day, it's only a game. Most games involve some kind of destruction and killing – it's just the way they are. The sooner people realise this and stop taking the whole thing so seriously, the better.

If your letter is selected as 'Letter of the Month', we'll send you a bundle of T-shirts and maybe even a game. COOL!

f14.95/285Bfr. For further details, e-mail them on redactie@pczone.nl, or call them on +31 (0)23 540.00.08. They are crazy guys. No, really.

WHICH 3D CARD?

Thank you for your excellent magazine. The reviews are superb. I have bought three games now on your recommendation, and I have not been disappointed. I now want to upgrade my P133 with a 3D accelerator. However, I am having a difficult task choosing which one to buy. I want to be able to play all the latest titles which are 3Dfx and Direct

3D compatible, as well as the up and coming titles which look superb, eg *Quake II*.

I hope you will be able to recommend one to me, as it's so hard trying to choose one. Thanks again for a great mag.

Jonathan Whittingham, Cix

W e'd recommend that you look at the *Gamer 3Dfx* card. It might not come with any software, but at around £100 it represents excellent value for money. If you want demos, check out the extra 3D Zone CD that came free with the October



Quake II will only look this good if you've got the right 3D accelerator card.

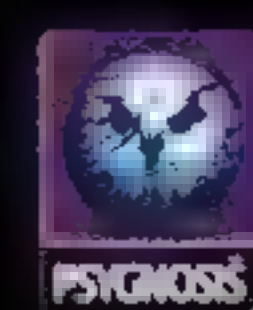
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◀ issue, and this month's CD for even more playable demos and patches. However, consider that if you want to play OpenGL games, you may have to fork out for another 16Mb of RAM.

STORIES SUCK!

Firstly, I would like to say the mag is great. Secondly, I would like to say that the chap who wrote in a couple of months ago saying that games should have stronger storylines at the expense of gameplay is an utter twat. Any serious game player will tell you that nobody gives a shit about the story. The most important thing is how the game PLAYS!!! Does *Quake* have a good story? Does it bollocks! Is it a great game? Yes! See my point? Don't get me wrong, the storyline is important in adventure games (I mean, imagine any of the *Alone In The Dark* games without the great storylines unfolding as you go along!), but when it comes to action games, who cares? Imagine what it would be like if developers spent all their resources making the best ever story for a game, but the graphics were VIC 20 style and it played like a huge steaming pile of dogshit. Face it, the best storyline ever will not make a shite game any better, so stop your bullshit and flush your head down the toilet quickly.

George MacDonald, Cix

P.S I would also like to say that anybody who finds Lara Croft fit needs help. She is not fit, she is simply a collection of polygons arranged in the shape of a woman, so get a life you sad lot.



We'd have to say that, as far as PC Zone is concerned, gameplay is everything – and we score all games accordingly. A game may look nice, have an intriguing story and strong characters, but if it ain't an adventure it doesn't really matter. If a game doesn't keep you playing, then who cares how it looks?

COUPLES THAT PLAY TOGETHER...

Here's one that I hope you guys can solve. I'm after some decent games that two players can play at the same time on the same machine with two joysticks (or gamepads). The only way that my missus lets me have any peace in my house and use my PC is if she can play as well. The only games that I've found so far are multi-player network games, which are a load of bollocks when you only have one machine. I did manage to get *Micro Machines*, but I found that to be too infantile. Anything that is racing or flying-based will suffice. All the best,

BigDick, Cix

As far as driving games go, you're a bit limited. Try *Ignition*, published through Virgin (reviewed a couple of issues back), which has a split-screen mode, or there's *Speed Demons from Eidos* if you're really desperate. In our experience, most girls seem to like beat 'em ups, so try *Fighting Force from Core Design* (which is excellent fun, two-player and supports co-operative and one-on-one modes) or maybe *Virtua Fighter*. Alternatively, get sporty and try *NHL 97*, *NBA*, *Pete Sampras Tennis* or any footie game – just make sure you lose every now and then to keep her interested. But then, considering your name, that's probably not an issue anyway.

DUNGEON KEEPER TOO EASY?

Dear PC Zone. To get straight to the point, I think *Dungeon Keeper* is too easy. I got it about five weeks ago and finished it in four days, and I'm not a geek who plays on the computer all day. I actually have a life and friends.

To get back to the point, I was wondering if Bullfrog are going to make an add-on for the game, like more levels and new monsters or something, because I'm pretty bored with the game, and I haven't played it since I completed it.

I really love *Diablo*. I was surprised when you only gave it a score of 88



Important Note: Let them win every now and then, or there'll be trouble.

because I haven't been able to stop playing it since I got it about three weeks ago, which is very good for me. I usually get bored with games after a week or so. I'm expecting a lot of insults, but please be gentle.

Jason Cooke, Cix

Charlie Brooker loved it (he reviewed it), Chris Anderson (Dep. Ed.) wasn't too impressed. He still maintains that it's too repetitive and the graphics are "arse". There is a mission disc for *Dungeon Keeper* on the way, though we're not sure exactly when. Let's just hope it doesn't slip a couple of years, eh? As far as *Diablo* is concerned, everybody in the office who played it, loved it – but the overall impression was that it wasn't quite a classic. Hopefully, *Diablo 2* will achieve PC Zone Classic status.

STOP MONKEYING AROUND WITH MONKEY

Monkey Island 3 is a threat to the Monkey-genre. I waited for *Monkey Island 2* since I was 7 years old. I have been waiting for *Monkey Island 3* since I was, hmmmmmm, I can't remember how long. I was waiting for a new wacky adventure game with cool graphics, that would keep me busy. What happens? The graphics have been changed into pure cartoony, children 'graphics'. How could LucasArts do something like that? OK, it needed a fix up, but this... It would have been great on other games, but *Monkey Island* needs something more. A bit more serious drawing. Not so cartoony. More like, well, *Monkey Island* with a little fixer upper, more like *Discworld*, more like every game that contains a little man running around. The characters are simply too large. And the new graphics don't include the command line at the bottom, but a

stupid magical coin. How stupid can they get? They are making *Monkey Island* for God's sake! Not *Full Throttle*. Please, don't take this as a threat not to buy *Monkey Island 3*. I won't miss it for the world. I just feel that they have been evil to the followers of the original two games in the series.

Steffen Braastad, Norway

To be honest, we too were a bit surprised at the new look *Monkey* when we first saw it a few months back, but once we started to play around with some early code, we were completely smitten. It was like meeting an old friend you haven't seen for a while. It may look a little, well, 'different', but LucasArts couldn't really have kept the same graphical style; it just looks too dated. You must have liked the demo we ran on the August issue? A taster of the great things to come, surely? Whatever the case, we'll be the first to tell you whether it's worth spending your money on when the third instalment is reviewed next month.



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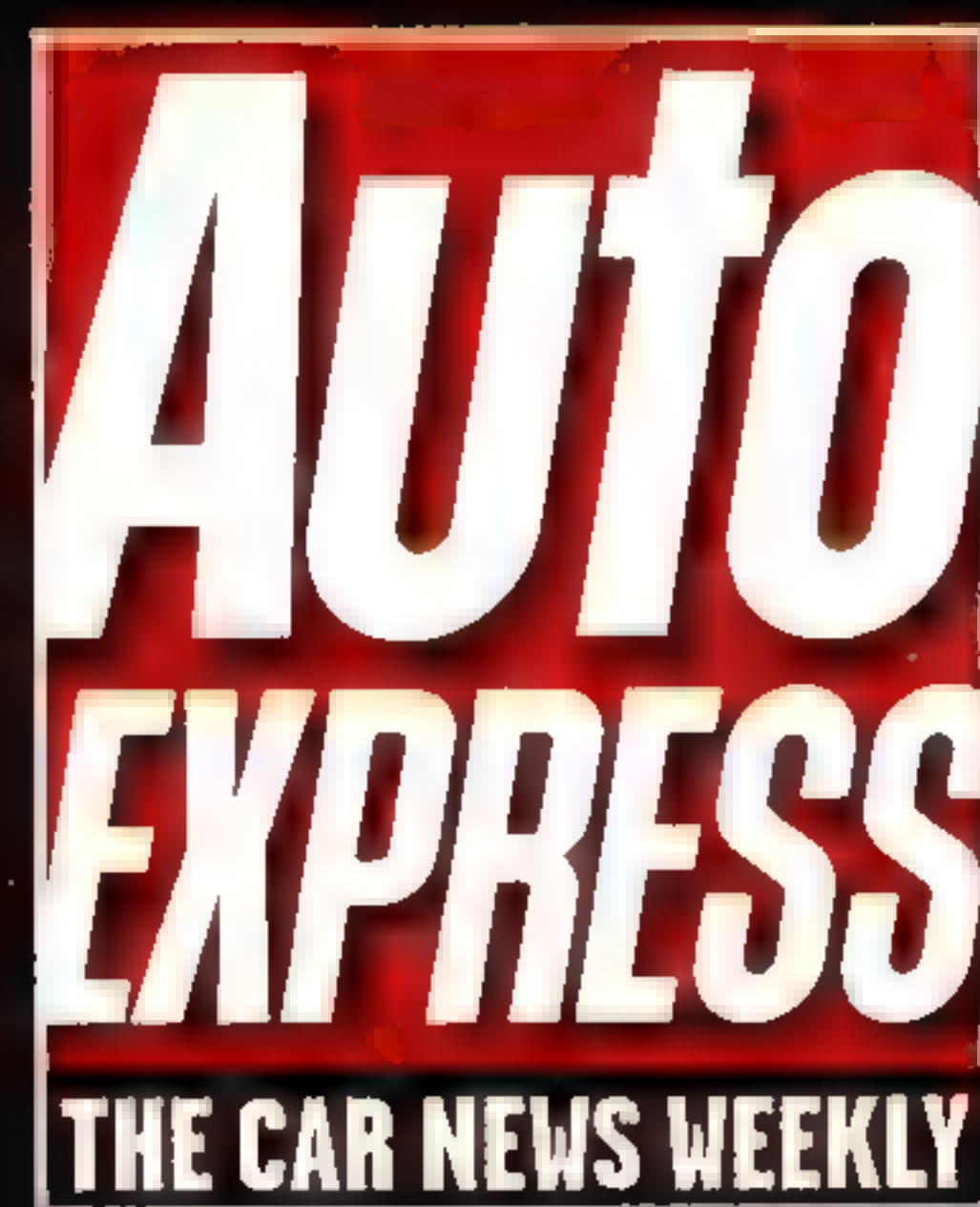
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Charlie Brooker has been reading what the papers say. And he doesn't like it one bit...

SUB-STANDARD!

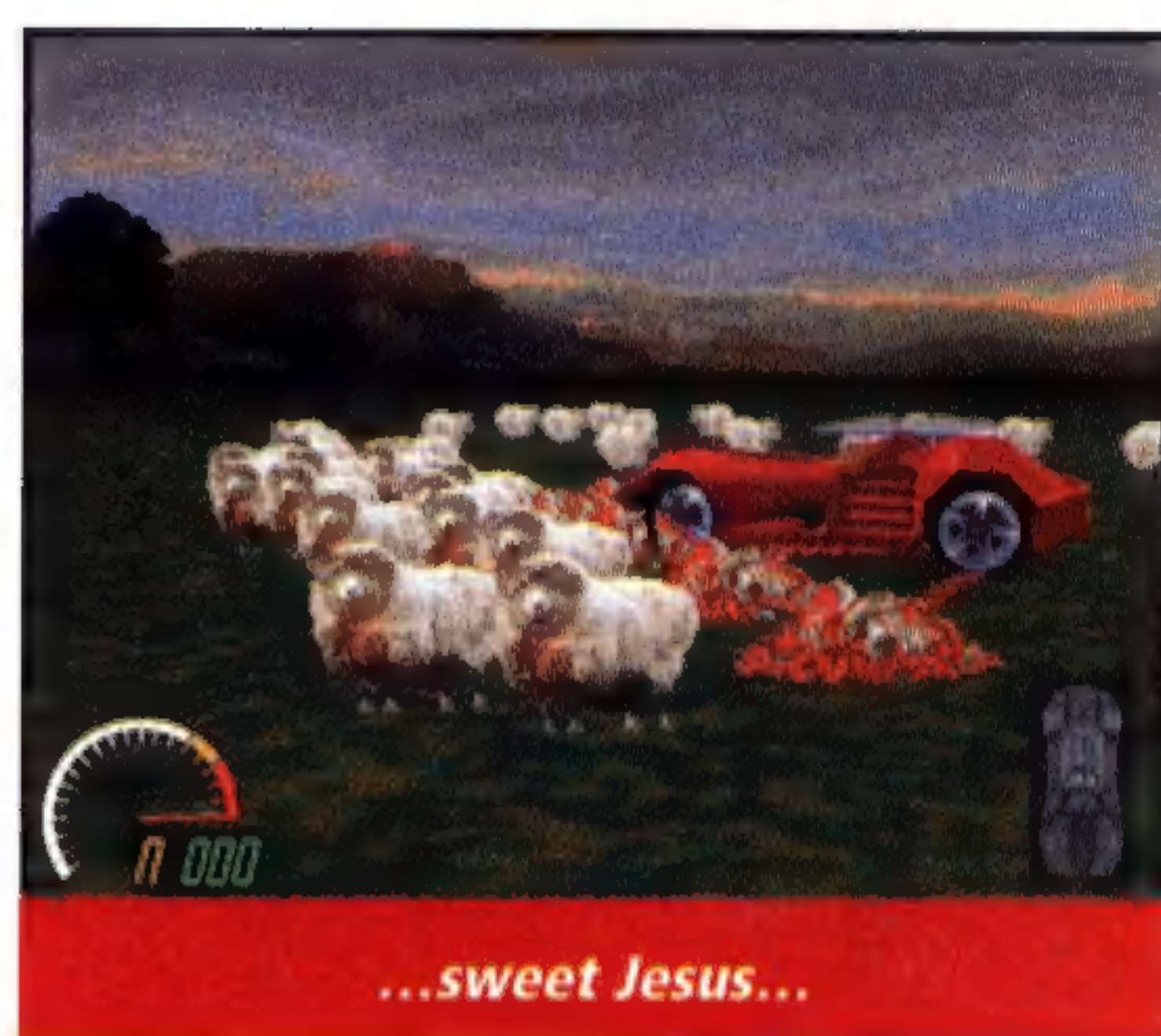


HAVING RECENTLY

a) moved to an area of London the tube planners forgot, and b) managed to completely destroy my bike (well okay, the pedal's fallen off – but do you have any idea how long I'll put off the simplest repair?), I've been forced to re-discover the delights of London's bus network. Buses are next to useless when you're in a hurry – thanks to the ludicrous state of traffic congestion, the poor things move through the streets at roughly the same speed as a quadriplegic dragging himself home by his eyelids – but if you've got plenty of time to kill, and there's a seat available, they're a godsend. Plenty of time for deep thought to the Walkman soundtrack of your choice, or an elongated dip into newsprint, or both. No matter how edgy you may have been at the outset, by the time you reach your destination you're as relaxed as a mildly drunk sloth who's just had a warm bath. In honey.

At least, that's usually what happens. Last week however, I could not relax. A newspaper upset me. My journey was marred – *two days running* – by a pair of idiotic, pontificating articles in the *Evening Standard*. Thursday's edition included an article which explained at length how *Tomb Raider* provides teenage boys with an 'unrealistic' view of women. Then on Friday it got better (ie worse) – an ineptly researched

follow-up piece (headed, predictably, with a *Carmageddon* grab), which was little more than an impassioned, all-out assault on the 'sick' nature of computer games in general. Besides adopting an absurdly hysterical "why must we fling this vile filth at our kids?" tone throughout, the writers had seen fit to litter their copy with 'facts' that, um, weren't particularly factual. Do you recall running over people in wheelchairs during a game of



Carmageddon? No? Funny that. Then, once the writers had run out of steam, the article closed pointlessly and inconclusively, with a mini-interview with a 'self-confessed' *Command and Conquer* addict, who said little of relevance to the preceding tripe.

We've seen it all before, of course, but that's another reason why this tabloid tub-thumping is so damned depressing. Do these people *never* learn? Why is it that the only references to computer games you'll find (outside the financial section) are either hand-wringing "Oh, isn't it awful?" whinges or trite, snobbish dismissals? How many times have you read a lofty newspaper

review of some imbecilic Schwarzenegger action flick in which the critic likens the simplistic slam-bang

pyrotechnics to a 'mere' video game? And why does every single article assume that only teenage boys play games anyway? Have you *seen* the average age of our readership? It's twenty-nine. *Twenty-nine*. A responsible adult group with mortgages, jobs and in many cases, offspring of their own.

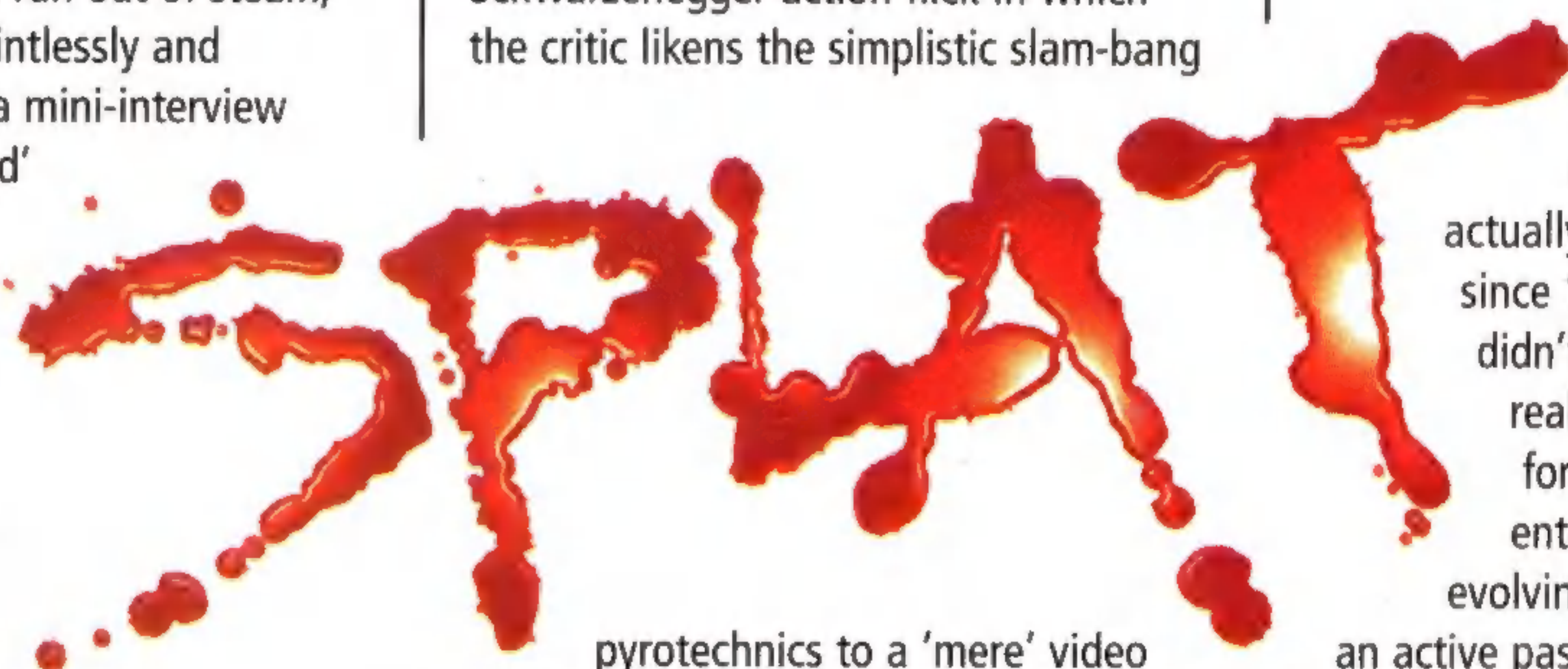
What's more, this dismissal is hypocritical. Isn't it strange how

newspapers which subscribe to the assumption that computerised entertainment is the exclusive pastime of socially inept lunkheads are simultaneously filling untold column inches with meaningless PR on the latest Planet Hollywood opening, or 'Rear of the Year', or *Emmerdale*, or William Hague (the latter two being completely interchangeable as far as the Pictures

Desk is concerned) – all disguised as 'news'?

The problem is, none of the writers have actually played a video game since 1982 – and even then they didn't appreciate it. They don't realise that this is the only form of current entertainment which is

evolving. Playing video games is an active pastime. At the very least, it improves hand-eye co-ordination, whilst at the other end of the scale it encourages lateral thinking and the development of problem-solving strategies. Reading space-wasting articles merely breeds ignorance. If I were parent to an impressionable thirteen-year-old boy, I know which activity I'd rather see him pursue. 2





LOOKING

BACK



Paul Presley's been playing real football, Paul Mallinson can't get the lid off his PC, where's it all going to end?, asks Chris Anderson.



HIS HAS BEEN THE LONG-PREDICTED 3DFX issue of PC Zone. Almost every game that has come in this month has had built-in support for the card, and even the ones that didn't were awaiting patches to solve the problem. Subsequently, being the spoilt rotters that we are, we've all got used to seeing fab-looking games and are no longer blown away when we see a title with 3Dfx support. This is a good thing. It means we can all get back to concentrating on the only thing that really matters in PC games, i.e. gameplay.

spending more time with the game than is good for him, and claims that *Hexen 2* deathmatch is just as good as deathmatch *Quake*, but no-one else seems to want to play it. Perhaps he'll take some cheer in finding all three *Zork* text adventures as freeware on the Internet which he's stuck on his Palm Pilot to keep him amused on his long train journey to work. The biggest surprise this month has got to be the news that our Editor Jeremy has spent inordinate amounts of time playing *CM2 97/98* (wow, that really is a *big* surprise: Entire *PC Zone* team). He confesses to playing with the data editor for hours on end, changing the stats of all the Arsenal players so they vaguely resemble a decent football team (*At least they beat Chelsea, eh Chris?* - Ed). Thanks for reminding me (not). Jeremy has also had the privilege of play-testing *Sensible Soccer 2000* which he says retains all the playability of the original game and now looks fantastic with the graphical overhaul it's been given. Paul Presley, for his part, has shunned the delights of *CM2* for a real game of football with his mates. He claims the real thing has a lot more to offer than its computer counterparts but we can't believe this can possibly be true. The rest of the time Paul's been playing *Shadows Of The*

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Hexen 2 is hogging everyone's hard disk space at the moment.

Not that News Ed Paul will be bothered about all of this, seeing as he's been playing with lots of emulators, like the one he's found for the Spectrum which he describes as 'brilliant'. Paul's also been discovering the delights *LBA2* has for would-be adventurers and claims the sequel is more involving and varied than the original. On a less happy note, Paul admits he's been dying to play lots of 3Dfx games, but he can't get the screws off his PC to put the card in. Our beleaguered News Ed is currently looking for a better screwdriver, so if any of you lot can help him out, feel free to do so. Speaking of screws, our man Charlie Brooker has a few loose which is why he spends most of his time looking for MAIME emulators, which he claims are fab. Other than that he's been playing *Hexen 2* which he says is 'a better single-player experience than *Quake*'. You're not wrong, Charlie. Our very own Macca will agree too, which is why he's been playing *Hexen 2* at home on, get this: his own network. Macca, you're a flash one. He's looking forward to getting his hands on an OpenGL version of *Doom* which some guy's been doing as part of a research project. More news as we get it.

Still on *Hexen 2*, our esteemed publisher John Davison admits to



Empire which he says 'has something about it that makes you want to go back to it time and again'. Moving away from footie, and on to things incredibly sad, Daniel Emery's still playing *Terris* (the tit), although he steadfastly claims it's more to annoy the Americans than to play the game, so we'll let him off then. Our Dan has been playing *Imperialism* to death too (in fact he was playing it even before he knew he was going to review it, so he must like it) and he sums it up neatly as '*Civilisation 97*'. Patrick McCarthy confesses to being one of the few people not taken in by *Carmageddon*: "once you get over the fact that you can run people over the actual racing is bog-standard" he says, a sentiment he shares with Jeremy, incidentally. Steve Hill was curiously silent when I asked him what he'd been up to over the last month and then all of a sudden I couldn't shut him up. "I've finally succumbed to *CM2* after 3 years" says Steve. "I found the demo on our CD and stayed up all night playing it". Yes okay Steve, you can stop now. "I reckon I've got Chester into the play-offs". No Steve, I want you to stop. "It's better than the real team's doing, I reckon...". Quite. On that bombshell I'm going to leave you all and get back to *XCOM 3*. Goodbye. **Z**

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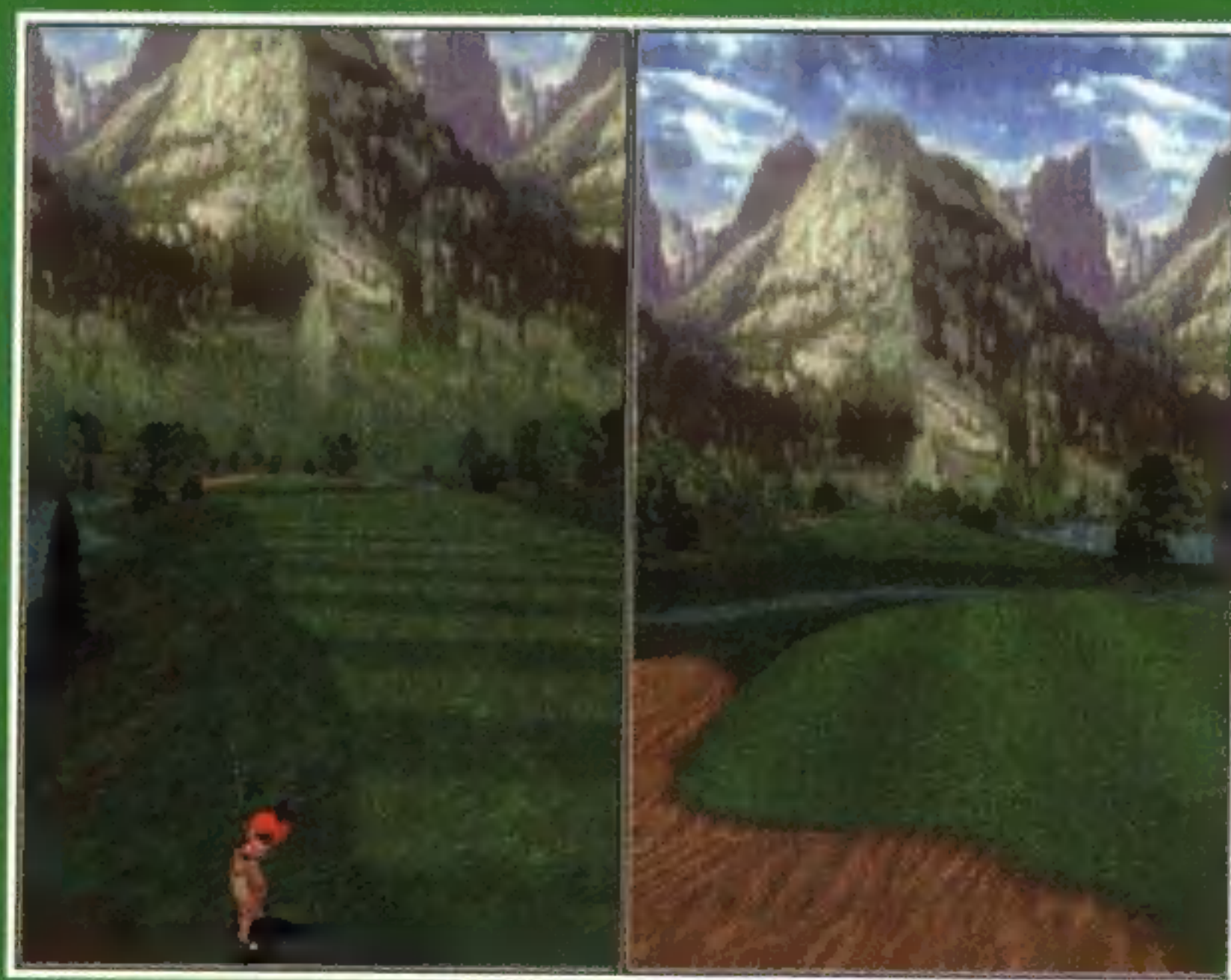
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Taken from PC CD-ROM Version



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